TheVillage

www.thevillage.co

Issue #239 November 2023

NEWS & FEATURES from Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Blackwell, Burcot Beoley, Cofton Hackett, Finstall, Hopwood, Bordesley, Rowney Green, Lickey, Lickey End, Marlbrook, The Oakalls & everywhere in between!

NEW DILSHAD
ALVECHURCH

2 RED LION STREET, ALVECHURCH,
WORCESTERSHIRE, B48 7LF.

CHRISTMAS DAY MENU

MERRY CHRISTMAS

1st Sitting: between 12noon ~ 3pm
2nd Sitting: between 3pm ~ 6pm

MEAL ONE

Prawn Cocktail
or
Chicken or Vegetable Soup
with Bread Rolls

Roast Turkey with Stuffing
Chipolata Sausages,
Roast Potatoes,
Boiled Potatoes, Sprouts,
Baby Carrots & Peas
Apple & Cranberry Sauce

Luxury Christmas pudding
with Custard Cream
or
Coffee

MEAL TWO

Onion Bhajee
or
Mixed Kebab

Kurzi Lamb *or* Chicken
Served with Special
Rice & Masala Sauce *or*
Vegetable Curry

Gulab Jam
or
Coffee

MEAL THREE

Soup
or
Chicken Pakora

Chicken Tikka Masalla
or
Tandoori Chicken
Shaslick Bhuna
(off the bone)
Both served with
Aloo Gobi &
Special Rice *or* Nan

Gulab Jam
or
Coffee

Tel: 0121 445 5583 & 445 5660
(Advanced Bookings & Deposit Required)

TheVillage Issue 239 November 2023

inside

Bringing you village life for more than 25 years

Editorial:
Francesca Peach

Tel: 07536 987950
email:
fran@villageonline.co.uk
Follow us on Instagram:
@thevillagemag

To advertise in TheVillage
Call or Whatsapp Sales:
07536 987950
email:
fran@villageonline.co.uk
visit:
www.villageonline.co.uk

Publisher:
Richard Peach
richard@villageonline.co.uk

The Village (ISSN 1466-3376) is published by Platform Publishing & Media Ltd (Reg Office: 87 Hewell Rd, Barnt Green, B45 8NL) and printed by Buxton Press in Derbyshire.

All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written consent is prohibited.
The publishers do not accept responsibility for any errors made in advertisements or for claims made by any advertisers which are incorrect.
The publishers reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason.
All material submitted for publication is done so at the owner's risk and no responsibility is accepted by the publisher for its return.

Christmas Events
Page 15

Darker Skies
Page 33

Walking in Barnt Green
Pages 35–48

Nature's Playground
Pages 41–43

Girls' Time to Shine
Page 54

Front cover: Fungi grows on a tree stump, photo by Michael Corfield, of Rowney Green.

BOOK YOUR
Christmas Party
at Hillscourt

Spiced Squash, Sweet Potato & Chick Pea Soup (v)(gf)(vg)
Creamy Garlic Mushrooms on Toasted Brioche with Parmesan Dressed Rocket Leaves (v)(gfo)(vgo)
Classic Prawn Cocktail topped with a Bloody Mary Sauce (gf)

Roast Sirloin of British Beef (served pink) with Yorkshire Pudding & Rich Red Wine Gravy (gfo)
Chicken Breast filled with Sage & Onion Seasoning wrapped in Bacon, Roast Gravy (gfo)
Roast Celeriac Steak set onto a Lentil Dahl, served with a Vegetable Bhaji & Seeds (v)(gf)(vg)
Grilled Sea Bass Fillet with a Puttanesca Sauce, topped with Crispy Julienne Leeks (gf)

Chocolate & Marmalade Panettone Pudding with Vanilla Bean Custard (v)(gf)(gfo)
White Chocolate & Raspberry Cheesecake (v)(gfo)(vgo)
Cheese & Biscuits served with Grapes, Celery & Chutney (v)(gfo)

Tea, Coffee & Dinner Mints

For enquiries and bookings, contact us on:
Tel: 0121 457 6100 | Email: info@hillscourt.co.uk

(v) – vegetarian, (vg) – vegan, (gf) – gluten-free, (vgo) – vegan option, (gfo) – gluten-free option

Dates available: December 8, 15, and 16
Price: £35 per person (includes Meal & Disco till 1am)
Special Deal: Bed & Breakfast for party guests at £50 for a Single room and £70 for a Double room

ARDEN BRIDGE SERVICES

MOT TESTING STATION

Servicing & Repairs for all makes & models

TYRES Supplied & Fitted

- MOT Testing Station
- Latest Diagnostic Equipment
- Collection & Delivery Service
- Courtesy Cars Available

Tel: 01564 742451 www.ardenbridge.com

Hill Top Garage, Alcester Road, Beoley, B98 9EP

An Independent Family Owned Funeral Directors

THOMAS BROTHERS

Family owned funeral homes in Redditch, Wythall, Alvechurch, Bromsgrove & Alcester.
We provide a friendly, dignified service paying special attention to detail.

REDDITCH • BROMSGROVE
01527 547777 01527 831700

WYTHALL • ALVECHURCH • ALCESTER
01564 822001 0121 445 3422 01789 330939

"A family concern"

www.thomasbrothers.co.uk

email: admin@thomasbrothers.co.uk

'Embarrassed apology' over delay to gate

A HOUSING developer has apologised for delays in creating long-awaited access to public open space on a village estate.

But as *The Village* went to press, work was still to start on installing the new access gate at Foxhills, off Fiery Hill Road, Barnt Green.

A representative of CALA Homes wrote to Bromsgrove District Council in September to say a new gate had been fabricated, but there had been "a mix-up in the ordering of some of the materials".

They added: "I can only apologise again for this and it is a great source of embarrassment for myself and CALA that it has taken this long.

Left: Access barred to all those without the gate code.

It will be done." The exchange was relayed to Barnt Green Parish Council's October meeting by district councillor Charlie Hotham.

The meeting heard the gate should have been installed by August 15 and, despite the apologies from CALA, work was still to start on site.

Coun Hotham said the planning case officer was chasing CALA to ensure the access was completed.

"There will be a celebration when it happens," he added.

Installation of the gate follows a breach of planning conditions notice issued earlier this year against the management company that took on the running of the shared part of the estate after its completion five years ago.

It is estimated that almost half of the public open space provided on the site as part of the planning permission remains behind the locked gate.

Once open, the question remains over another gate installed on the Cherry Hill Road entrance to the site, which would block pedestrian access through to the Lickey Hills even when the new access is open.

This public right of way, insisted on by Bromsgrove during the planning process, was later described by CALA as "an aspiration" of the council.

SHOPLIFT 'TSUNAMI'

VILLAGE shopkeepers are suffering a "tsunami of shoplifting" as crime gangs steal whatever they can grab, from their stores then walk out with little fear of being apprehended.

Incidences of shoplifting are up by more than 60 per cent on last year across the district and now police and local councils are planning to hold a meeting with traders to look at ways to combat the crime.

Recent parish council meetings in both Alvechurch and Barnt Green have been dominated by the problem, with traders telling of the "soul destroying" effects on their business and staff.

The thieves are even stealing from charity shops, with a child's bicycle being stolen from Acorns in Barnt Green within minutes of being put on display.

Part of the problem, according to some, is that the police are not responding to reports of shoplifting, while the police say the stores, particularly the larger ones, could be doing more to deter the thieves.

District councillor Charlie Hotham told Alvechurch parish councillors: "We are suffering a tsunami of shoplifting. They are organised gang types and they move from area to area.

"It is a serious problem. Shopkeepers in Barnt Green are reporting it regularly, but no one from the police turns up. Ultimately, it is a police problem and action needs to be taken."

The meeting heard that Alvechurch and Barnt Green were particularly hard hit because the thieves were arriving in the villages to steal from the large chains then stealing from the independent retailers.

Parish councillor Paul Edwards said: "These are organised gangs that are going into the Tesco in Barnt Green and Co-Op in Alvechurch and blitzing the place. We can't just sit back and say 'that's it'."

Police community support officer Mark Hyder said: "It is a very difficult one because we can't be the security guard for the shops. We are trying to do additional patrols and liaising with the managers of the shops in order to reduces the thefts.

"They have a 'no challenge' policy when it comes to shoplifters. The difficulty of this is the thieves then know they are an easy target so they just keep on coming back."

PCSO Hyder said shopkeepers needed to report all crime because because the reports feed into the figures – "and then we can get extra manpower".

Coun Hotham told Barnt Green Parish Council the district council had committed to fund a Shopwatch scheme, but there were data protection issues to iron out.

He told *The Village* that a meeting is to be organised by the police once they have all the other agencies on board.

Decision 'most important for half a century'

PLANS TO turn the former Alvechurch social club into a budget hotel could be determined this month in the face of almost 150 heartfelt objections from villagers and renewed opposition by Alvechurch Parish Council.

The controversial scheme in the village conservation area has alarmed many people because of its scale, the loss of village centre parking spaces and questions over the need for such a facility.

Alvechurch Parish Council said a revised application lacks vital information, especially as it is "one of the most important proposed developments affecting Alvechurch for at least half a century".

The parish council submitted a detailed response over seven pages in October, pointing out that as the applicant had still failed to submit a Design and Access Statement, the application should be rejected and returned.

There have already been a number of extensions to the decision date, with the last one expiring at the end of October. The next planning committee meeting at Bromsgrove is scheduled for November 6.

'Mr Angry' in wait over lifts delays

DISMAY greeted the news that Network Rail had been unable to provide a timescale to Barnt Green Parish Council for installation of passenger lifts at the village station.

Parish clerk Eleanor Choudry told the monthly meeting she had received an email from Network Rail saying: "Apologies, we have been unable to pull together the briefing note ahead of your meeting tonight."

The council had been hoping for an update on the installation, promised for this autumn – eight years after a new footbridge was installed.

Parish chairman Robert Cholmondeley said: "My concern is that the Network Rail projects are in five year periods and the current one ends in March 2024.

"If it slips into the next five-year period there will be other more important projects that will take precedence.

"Let's see what they come back with, but if we get something like 'finalising the design'... the council will be contacting the MP and I will be contacting the chief executive of Network Rail in a personal capacity.

"I have nothing else to say or else I will become Mr Angry," added Coun Cholmondeley.

Oil dump horror in village lane

A VILLAGE fly-tipping black spot was the site of a "horrible" incident when a large oil tank was dumped there (above).

Alvechurch Parish Council heard that waste oil had leaked on to Lea End Lane, Hopwood, and towards the stream. District Councillor Charlie Hotham told the council that Environmental Services had now removed the tank and put up signs about the spillage.

"How could somebody do that?" He asked, as the spillage could contaminate local wildlife and the stream.

No free Eats at village park party

A PARISH council is to meet the organisers of a food and music event held in September to discuss residents' concerns.

Social Eats Music and Street Food Festival was held on Bittell Road playing fields, Barnt Green, with some living near to the venue saying there was thumping music all day.

They say there was also a lack of clear signage and parking, with cars parked dangerously along the road, and blocking pavements..

One resident told Barnt Green Parish Council that a dog bag dispenser had been attached to her fence without her permission, which was subsequently knocked off leaving a hole in her fence.

Parish chairman Robert Cholmondeley explained that the council provided the field used for Social Eats after reassurance that they were a reputable organisation used by Bromsgrove District Council.

The main concern was that Social Eats had told the parish council that they would be visiting neighbouring properties in the run-up to the event to advise them it was happening and offer free tickets.

The council heard that this did not happen and told residents that they would be following up with Social Eats

Parents 'parking across pavement'

POLICE are going to check up on reports of illegal parking at school pick-up times in Barnt Green after reports of some large vehicles being parked on Poplar Drive "with all four wheels on the pavement".

LANDONS
Bathrooms • Kitchens • Bedrooms • Tiles

Landon House. The Crossroads, Kidderminster Road,
(A448). Dodford, Bromsgrove. B61 9DU
Tel 01527 882939 www.landoninteriors.co.uk Founded 1957
Open Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm Sat 10am - 4pm

Independent influence

News from the independent councillors representing Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Beoley and Hopwood at Bromsgrove

During our first six months as independent councillors, representing your views on Bromsgrove District Council, major changes within the council have taken place and there is a lot still to happen over the coming year. We thought this is now an ideal time to update everyone.

We have included below our contact details, should you require more information.

New Governance Arrangements – At the elections back in May 2023 residents voted for change within the administration. In response members overwhelmingly agreed to adopt a new model of governance within the authority aimed at increasing political consensus.

The new model is for the leader and elected cabinet system to remain, however the chairs of the Overview & Scrutiny and Audit & Governance will be elected from the opposition members. In addition, Cabinet Advisory Panels will be set up and all parties will sign a memorandum of undertaking to ensure that this system will stay in place for the duration of the current administration.

This is a major change to make the council more democratic and accountable. The controlling group will no longer be able to scrutinise their own decisions, which will give greater openness and transparency.

Boundary Review – an electoral review by The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has started in Bromsgrove district. The review is being undertaken due to the population growth in the district which has led to a level of "poor electoral inequality" and this will be exacerbated over the coming years. The local community

District councillors Alan Bailes, Rachael Bailes and Charlie Hotham.

will have the opportunity to tell the commission their views about how wards should be arranged. Consultation will start in early 2024 with implementation of new electoral arrangements announced in May 2027, in time for the next district elections.

Strategic Planning – the district council is developing a new and revised district plan, in which future housing and employment growth across the district will be allocated. The process is expected to be completed within approximately a three-year timeframe, based upon current Government guidance.

Exact housing and employment numbers will be confirmed by the government, in the meantime council officers continue to work on the options for the plan.

Community engagement and consultation will be key part to the process and further details of opportunities for public engagement will be made known. Independents are part of the Strategic Planning Group and will report regularly on the process.

Polling Stations - the district council is inviting residents to give feedback on any problems with where they go to vote. This includes convenience of the current polling arrangements, together with any accessibility issues.

You can give your ideas for alternative locations for polling stations. The consultation runs until 13th November 2023. If you are interested, please visit the Bromsgrove council website and give your feedback.

Library Unlocked – there is concern about the Worcestershire County Council scheme to extend hours of access to libraries by means of an electronic system, which involves reduced hours of staff cover, Rachael Bailes has information from Alvechurch Library team about the extent of the changes proposed. As a result, several district councilors have highlighted their concerns, and the matter has been included in the Overview and Scrutiny Board. It is expected that the council will want answers to questions about the scheme from the county council and assess concerns over the scheme.

Naturalisation (Rewilding) - Bromsgrove District Council's grass cutting team serves 23 areas within the district. Following a motion at an Emergency Climate Change group in 2022, several grass areas have trialed grass being allowed to grow and rewild in order to support naturalisation and encourage biodiversity.

The Environmental Officer presented a paper to Cabinet that will further enhance and embed the trial by way of machinery that will be used, along with local engagement and the education through scientific reports of the effectiveness. The Cabinet has agreed to take forward a budget and we are awaiting approval through the budget setting process.

How to Contact Us

Alan Bailes – Alvechurch South
a.bailes@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Rachael Bailes – Alvechurch Village
r.bailes@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Charlie Hotham – Barnt Green and Hopwood
c.hotham@bromsgrove.gov.uk

~Electrician~
www.AllmanElectrical.co.uk
Competent, Registered and Insured.
Satisfaction is guaranteed!
- We Love Small and Big Jobs!
- Electric Vehicle chargers
- Consumer unit upgrades
- Full Rewires

Quick response and exceptional customer service
WE WILL ANSWER YOUR CALL!
Call Matthew on
01527 306 732
Office hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

Royal Motorways
COACH HIRE AND DAYTRIPS
Our fleet of coaches is also available for Private Hire, School Trips, Sporting Events, Weddings, Event Transport and Regular Contracts.
Our 2023 Daybreak brochure is out now!
Our ever-popular programme offers a varied selection of excursions, from family days out, trips to popular seaside resorts, and historic venues, to market locations and cultural attractions, with some new additions too!
Call for a quote or a brochure today on:
01386 791842
You can download a copy from our website:
www.royalmotorways.co.uk
Or find us on Facebook for regular updates.

Welcoming new patients
WHAT WE CAN OFFER YOU:
General Dentistry | Dental Implants
Teeth Straightening | Teeth Whitening
Facial Aesthetics | Hygienist
HAWKINS
DENTAL & IMPLANT CLINIC
To book a new patient consultation call 0121 514 1196
or visit hawkinsdentalcare.co.uk
a part of PORTMAN dental care

20 From The Village archive Years Ago

WE ALWAYS try to bring a little colour to the dull days of November and 2003 was no exception with this lovely cover picture by photographer Jo Cound, who had moved from her beloved Lickeys to Scotland some time before this issue came out, but had left us with a few gems to use.

VILLAGE MAGIC: We interviewed Christian Fletcher, a 17-year-old student already making a name as a close-up magician, at The Swan pub in Alvechurch, where he lived. He wondered then if he'd be able to make a living from his talents, but a quick Google 20 years on shows him still conjuring up magic for audiences.

NEW VILLAGE mini-roundabouts were branded "dangerous" by villagers. The one in Tanyard Lane, Alvechurch, has long gone, but the Bittell Road installation (above) remains.

BOOKING IN . . . Saturday library assistant Jennifer Davies (above, right) joins the team at Alvechurch Library, including Community Library Co-ordinator Geraldine Pigott (left).

LEFT: DOROTHY, the Lion and the Tin Man during dress rehearsals for Alvechurch Amateur Dramatic Society's upcoming performance of *The Wizard of Oz*.

10 From The Village archive Years Ago

OUR NOVEMBER 2013 cover photograph was very similar to the one ten years previously, but this time the picture was the work of *Village* reader Dennis Brown, then of Hopwood – and now Alvechurch – whose images have graced the front cover many times over the years.

ALVECHURCH SCHOOL pupils say thank you to crossing patrolman Hughie Smith, aged 79, who was retiring after 13 years in charge of the lollipop outside their schools.

CARS PARKED across the pavement outside Lickey HIlls Primary School at home time (left) and similar images taken in Alvechurch caused an outcry, with the newly formed Alvechurch Community Safety Committee launching an awareness campaign.

MOLTEN BRONZE is poured during the casting of a new bell for St Michael's Church, Cofton Hackett, to replace the one stolen the previous autumn. The casting at the Loughborough bell foundry of John Taylor & Co, who have been making bells since 1784, was watched by a group of more than 20 members of St Michael's.

Find the middle way

Dear Editor – Peter McHugh's letter "Support the Nimbys" (featured in the October issue of *The Village*) is a perfect example of polar opposite views of an argument.

He suggests that "Nimby" was a term created by greedy "Developers" (which is at best, a guess and certainly not factual) but then goes on to create a term of his own: "Ticky tacky, quick buck, housing estates."

These are people's homes. It's where they live and bring up their children so should not be subject to subjective criticism by someone like Mr McHugh who may be fortunate enough to live in a larger country house.

As a resident of this wonderful village, I can see both points of view and, like many things, the core of the argument lies somewhere in the middle.

Richard Thorndike, Alvechurch

Turned off by lights

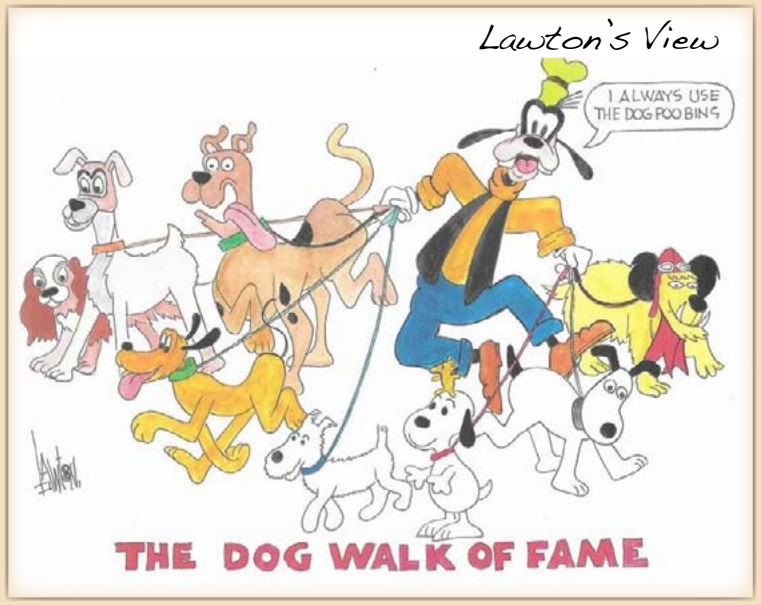
Dear Editor – I fully support the Alvechurch residents who voiced their objections to the new street lighting.

I believe Alvechurch and especially settlements around it are still safe to walk around after dark without the street lighting that adds to light pollution and kills the semi rural character of those settlements.

Alex Nowek, Bordesley

Times, please!

Dear Editor – I am writing to you regarding the news article in October's *Village* magazine.



It was reported that Aled Luckman spoke about about the repainting and installing of new signs for Blue Badge Holders in disabled bays in Alvechurch.

This is all very well but there are no time restrictions on these bays.

Certain people are using these as their own personel parking spaces so short-term genuine users will not be able to benefit from these improvements unless restrictions are imposed.

Michael Lewis, Alvechurch

Care to cross

Dear Editor – I was so pleased to read Rachel Banner's letter about Barnt Green shopping in your recent issue. The shopping area desperately needs a push button crossing, like Alvechurch and Rubery, ideally it would be close to the Post Office.
I have approached the parish council who say it is out of their jurisdiction. Councillor Hotham has been most helpful but only pressure from all the local residents will see any progress

Stella J Dugdale, Barnt Green

What happened to Cofton Hackett?

Dear Editor – How sad that on a recent visit to my childhood home of Cofton Hackett I noted how downtrodden it looked.
The Stocken bridleway was always a car's width wide, now overgrown to a single path. It appears that false promises were made, which, from talking to people now seem nothing short of farcical.

Sadly it looks like these golden promises have been long forgotten.

I think sadly that Cofton Hackett was seen as a ploy just to build houses. Now in my eyes it resembles a sad reflection on how developments hoodwink local councils and planners. I think the local surrounding fields will fall into house building too.

Paul Carter, Former Cofton Hackett resident

Have your say . . . about anything!

email: editor@villageonline.co.uk

Please include your name and address – even if you request them to be withheld from publication. We reserve the right to edit submissions for reasons of space or legality.

The deadline for the next issue is November 10th 2023.

WHERE'S VINNY?

ALVECHURCH pupil Elliott Shields, aged nine, who attends Crown Meadow First School, shows off the Mini Vinny he won for finding the little creature in October's hunt the hedgehog competition in *The Village*.

If you want to win one for yourself, you'll need to try to find the little hedgehog hiding somewhere in this magazine (the one shown above is just a guide).

Tell us where he's hiding via email – see details on bottom of the page opposite – and please include your name, address and phone number, and we'll draw a winner at random.

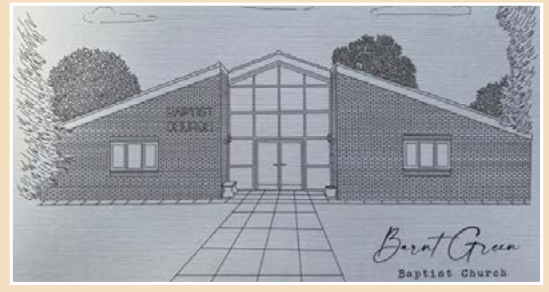
The closing date is midnight on November 10 2023. We'll let you know if you've won and you can collect your Mini Vinny from our office – and pose for a photo with your prize!

A century in Barnt Green

Dear Editor – Barnt Green Baptist Church on Bittell Road has stood, in one form or another, by the playing fields since 1923, the vision of a man to see a non-conformist spiritual presence in the village that could bring the comfort, joy, peace and life that Jesus offers to all.

I wasn't brought up going to church so I know how daunting it is to walk through the door to begin with. But when I tried out Barnt Green Baptist Church with my then two-year-old daughter, it was such a warm welcome and very relaxed. In a smaller church you can really get to know people, and it's been a lovely, safe place to bring my two girls up in.

Our children's work is growing and thriving. We have our "Adventurers" group which currently has reception, Year 1 and Year 2 aged children, though we'd love to welcome babies and pre-schoolers too. We also have our



"Explorers" group which currently has children from years 3 to 7, we'd love to welcome some youth/teenagers to the group.

We usually start altogether in the main service, and then break out into our children's groups. We generally have a chat, a bible story, a related craft and then play. Then we come back together or the end of the service before refreshments and chat. Every other month we'll have an "all age" service where we all stay in together and the service is family friendly.Aside from our regular Sunday morning services at 10:30am, we also have a community coffee morning on a Wednesday 10am-12. Our Christmas family service will be on Sunday 17th December at 10:30am.

Our carols by candlelight will be on Sunday 24th December at 4:30pm. We would love to welcome you.

Our Facebook and Instagram pages are the best places to follow for the latest news. Or contact familypastoral@bgb.org.uk if you have any questions or want to know more.

Hannah Jeffery, Barnt Green

Lickey & Blackwell Parish Council News

Newsletter November 2023

Last year's winning Christmas card design, by Sophie Field.

Christmas Events

Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council have two Christmas events for residents planned.
At 4pm on Sunday 10th December we have our annual Christmas concert with Blackwell Concert Band and the choir from Lickey School. Mince pies and refreshments will be served. Santa will be coming to give out prizes to our competition winners and to switch on the Christmas tree lights. Come along to Trinity Church, Lickey, at 4pm for the festivities.
On Friday 8th December, Santa will be flying into Blackwell to light our Christmas tree and lead some carol singing at St Catherine's Church at 5pm. We will be joining Blackwell Community Hall for mince pies, mulled wine and more music afterwards. More details will be available on our webpage and Facebook page nearer the time.

Santa working his magic.
Photo by Mary Clarke

Christmas Competition

We are asking children across the Parish and at the two parish schools to take part in our annual Christmas card competition. The main winner will receive copies of their professionally printed card and other prizes shall be awarded to the runners up. The theme is "Your favourite Christmas song/carol." Please create a picture of your favourite and send it in to Lisa, our Executive Officer, at The Trinity Centre office, Lickey, or you can hand in your entry at Lickey or Blackwell schools. The closing date is 15th Nov. Entries will be judged, and the winners announced at our annual Christmas events.

Grants

We would like to remind residents that community groups or projects in the Parish may be eligible to apply for a grant of up to £500 from the Parish Council. In recent years we were happy to help the Blackwell Festival group, The Bromsgrove Citizens' Advice service, the Blackwell Community Hall and the Blackwell Community Garden. Look at our website for the policy and application form or contact our Executive Officer if this is of interest to you.

Play Area Works

The Parish Council are working to refurbish and improve the play area in Blackwell. Any suggestions from residents will be welcomed. Sadly, we will be closing the play area for a few days during October half term for this work to take place. Thank you to Blackwell First School and our contractors for your assistance.

Congratulations

Our Chairman Cllr Bakul Kumar has been shortlisted for a prestigious national award as 'Councillor of the Year' for his work with Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council. We are immensely proud of his achievements and appreciate his hard work. We would like to wish him good luck at the finals for the NALC Star Council Awards 2023 final on 29th November.

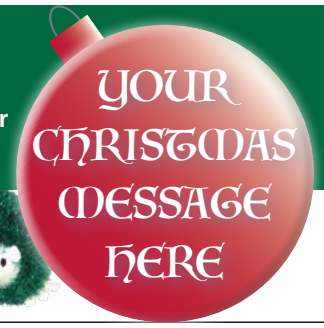
The full Parish Council, with Bakul, centre.

Contact Us

Lisa Winterbourn, our Executive Officer, may be contacted on: eo@lickeyandblackwellpc.org or: 07930 837770. For more info visit: www.lickeyandblackwellpc.org or facebook.com/lickeyandblackwellcouncil

SEASONS GREETINGS

Our Christmas message baubles will be back next month (like the one on the right). If you'd like to feature a message from you or your business, contact **editor@villageonline.co.uk** for prices and booking.



Christmas is coming

Alvechurch Christmas lights switch on will be held on Saturday 2 December in The Square. Choirs will be performing and Father Christmas will also be there to watch the lights come on.

Barnt Green will also be hosting its Christmas Lights switch-on event on Saturday 2 December on Hewell Road, check their social media and website for further information.

Blackwell and Lickey Parish Council's annual Christmas concert will be held on Sunday 10 December at 4pm at Trinity Church, Lickey.

Bromsgrove invites residents to the annual light trail at Sanders Park on Saturday 2 December. There will be music and entertainment including a "meet and greet" with Christmas Elves, as well as lots of twinkly lights.

Head along to Blackwell Tree lighting with Santa at St Catherine's Church on Friday 8 December at 5pm, followed by mince pies and mulled wine at Blackwell Community Hall.

Alvechurch Village Hall is holding a Christmas Craft Fayre on November 12 from 10am-4pm, pop along to pick up beautiful Christmas gifts. Entry is £1 and raised funds will go towards the Village Hall

Alvechurch Dramatic Society present their upcoming production *The 39 Steps*, by John Buchan and adapted by Patrick Barlow from the film by Alfred Hitchcock. Running from 23-25 November at 7.30pm in Alvechurch Village Hall.

A Christmas Fair will be held on 2nd December at 11am-2pm in Holy Trinity Church, Lickey. £1 admission to raise funds for the Christmas Shelter and church

The Midland Sinfonia will be hosting a festive concert "Tis the Season" on 2nd December in The Ark, Alvechurch. Tickets from Gin & Pickles & The Lounge in the Square Alvechurch. Find out more at: www.midlandsinfonia.co.uk

St Laurence Church, Alvechurch, is hosting a community lunch on Christmas Day at 1pm. Everyone is welcome to join for lunch, which will be free. More information can be found on p.52.

The Barnt Green Wassail will be held on 28 December, processing to the Old Orchard. More information will be available closer to the time.

Alvechurch Parish Council

serving Alvechurch, Bordesley, Hopwood, Rowney Green and Weatheroak

Parish news

Alvechurch Parish at Christmas

Parish-wide Christmas decoration competition

Don't forget our annual Christmas decoration competition in which you can win a trophy! Please let us know the address of the premises you're nominating, and attach a picture if possible. You can nominate your own display if you wish, or others you spot while around and about. This competition includes the whole Parish – Alvechurch village, Bordesley, Hopwood, Rowney Green and Weatheroak.

Send an email with your nomination to assistantclerk@alvechurch.gov.uk between 27 November and 13 December 2023. The winners will be announced on our Facebook page.

Best external house and/or front garden display

Best decorated front door or window

Best decorated front door or window – Commercial Premises

For a full list of judging criteria, visit alvechurch.gov.uk

Alvechurch Village Christmas lights switch on

Saturday 2 December from 4pm

Keep an eye on social media for more information.

Alvechurch Parish Council Chairman's Christmas Message

On behalf of all Parish Councillors and Officers, I wish all of you a very happy festive season.

Alvechurch Parish Council is committed to supporting all its residents in whichever way we can.

We encourage all our residents to engage with us as it is through collaborative working and cooperation we can help to improve our Parish.

We are always keen to hear your views and listed below are the links that help you keep in touch.

Councillor Surgery dates

The next Councillor Surgery will be held in December at the Coach and Horses, Weatheroak. Please keep an eye on our social media and website for dates.

Useful contacts

Alvechurch Village

Peter Freeman
Sue Lambert
Tony Williams
Keith Wiseman
Marc Worrall
Brett Shepherd
Nigel Cuttress

Hopwood

Paul Edwards
Samantha Lewis

Rowney Green and Bordesley

Rachael Bailes
Stephen Hornsby
Barry Thornton

Alvechurch Parish Council

serving Alvechurch, Bordesley, Hopwood, Rowney Green and Weatheroak

Have your say

We're keen to receive your comments or queries; do please contact the Parish Office if you wish to discuss any matter.

APC office

Jayne Smailes
Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer
clerk@alvechurch.gov.uk

Fay Murphy
Assistant Clerk
assistantclerk@alvechurch.gov.uk

Call us on **0121 447 8016**

Email **clerk@alvechurch.gov.uk**

www.alvechurch.gov.uk

/AlvechurchParishCouncil

Village artists on show

THE North Worcestershire Art Collective are making preparations for their upcoming exhibition at Blackwell Community Hall.

The art exhibition, which will run on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 November will be the third exhibition the group has held together, and their second one held at the hall. Jane Aston, one member of the group said: "It is a fabulous building and lends itself really well for exhibitions."

The North Worcestershire Art Collective comprises eight artists who collaborate for exhibitions. They met through Worcestershire Open Studios and proclaim they all share "a deep love and passion for all things arty".

They promise a warm welcome and an enjoyable, informative exhibition this year.

Visitors will have chance to meet the artists and discover what inspires them, and the techniques they employ.

Original artwork and prints will be available to purchase.

At last year's exhibition (above): Members of the North Worcestershire Art Collective.

The exhibition will run from 25-26 November 10am - 4pm. Free entry. For more information, please contact:
Michelle Doidge: 07866 656218
Suzanne Nicholl: 07515 027944

Conducting a new season of music

THE Midland Sinfonia kicked off their new season at Alvechurch. They held a pre-concert reception for their sponsors and patrons, before treating their audience to a delight of classical well known and lesser known pieces.

The show *Dance the Night Away* was devoted to dance, and Director of Music, Shulah Oliver led the musicians as they performed works composed in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The orchestra played a wide range of symphonies included *The Blue Danube* by Strauss, *Five Old English Dances* by English pianist and composer Christian Carpenter, No.3 *Rigaudon*, a sprightly folk dance and *Simply Symphony* by Britten.

The concert was brought to a close by a rousing performance of Copland's *Hoedown* from *Rodeo* which got feet tapping.

Their next concert will be "*Tis the Season", held on Saturday 2nd December featuring the beautiful "Winter" movements by both Glazunov and Vivadi.

TheVillage *Directory*

To get your business or service noticed, call us on **0121 445 6757**

AS TIME GOES BY
MEMORIALS THAT REFLECT A LIFETIME
Supplier of Headstones & Cremation Tablets
KEVIN PORTER
T: 01527 550505 / 07835 523640
E: kfporter@blueyonder.co.uk
W: www.astimegoesby.org.uk
Unit 5, Dunlop Rd, Hunt End Industrial Estate, Redditch B97 5XP Home visits available

S4F OUTDOOR FUN
FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON
CLAY SHOOTING EXPERIENCES
AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT DECEMBER
CONTACT MARK TREVERTON 01527 575141
mark@shooting4fun.co.uk | shooting4fun.co.uk

A.S. PAINTING & DECORATING
For all your decorating needs
contact Alan
on 07730 477564
Cleanliness Assured ● Free Quotes

K S Installations
Kevin Smith
ksinstallations@hotmail.co.uk
- Plumbing & Heating Services
- Boiler Replacement
- Bathrooms
- Service & Repair
- Pipework Design & Installation
- Domestic, Commercial & Industrial

Tel: 0121 445 5636
Mobile: 07813 188806
Which? Trusted trader
WORCESTER Bosch Group Worcester boiler accredited installer
Gas Safe 213459

newtonbathrooms
PROFESSIONAL BATHROOM INSTALLATIONS
- Plumbing
- Plastering
- Tiling
- Carpentry
- Vinyl/Laminate Fitting
- Fully Insured

Phil Newton
t. 0800 310 2720
m. 07900 925 651
w. www.newtonbathrooms.co.uk e. sales@newtonbathrooms.co.uk

Elite Sweeps
Professional Chimney Sweep
& HETAS Stove Installer
- Prompt, reliable and friendly service
- Cowls and Chimney Pots fitted
- Fully qualified and fully insured
- Guild certificates issued after every sweep

HETAS
FIRE KILLS YOU CAN PREVENT IT
Call Eddie: 01527 962555 / 07712 220671
www.elitesweeps.co.uk

Breeze
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- Boilers - Installs, Servicing & Repairs
- Compliance Checks
- Plumbing
- Domestic & Commercial

0121 758 5311
info@breezehotandcold.co.uk
www.breezehotandcold.co.uk

10% OFF ALL ROOF WORK
Checkatrade.com
WEATHERGUARD Roofing Professionals
Specialists in all types of Roofing, Complete Roofs, Ridge Tiles, Lead Work, Chimneys, Fascias, Soffits, Guttering, Gutter Cleaning
Call 01527 962972 / 07467 159012
www.weatherguardservices.co.uk
info@weatherguardservices.co.uk

CASPIDGE
CONSTRUCTION
BESPOKE HOMES
A family run business based in Burcot, with a combined experience of over 60 years in the housing and building industry.
LABC Excellence Awards Regional Finalists
New build / Commercial works /Extension alterations / Carpentry joinery / Landscaping
Call: 07738687684 / 01527 873848
Email: caspidge@gmail.com
Web: www.caspidgeconstructionltd.co.uk

Morgan plumbing and heating ltd
Lloyd Morgan
07789 622453
0121 445 6441
morganplumbingandheating.co.uk
City & Guilds Fully Qualified Plumber

Protect your loved ones by making a Will today
Sue Jenden Associates
- Specialists in Wills, Trusts, inheritance tax planning, and administration of estates
- Affiliate member of the Society of Trust & Estate Practitioners
- Meetings in your own home
- Based in Lickey ◆ Fixed fees

Tel: 0121 445 5874
info@suejendenassociates.co.uk
www.suejendenassociates.co.uk
APPROVED CODE
Institute of Professional Willwriters MEMBER
This firm complies with the IPW Code of Conduct

Painter & Decorator
All aspects covered
Steve Wills
07948 605 506
0121 624 2281
stevewills1971@hotmail.com

SENIOR COMPANIONSHIP & CONCIERGE
We are not a care service, our discreet companion and concierge services allow us to provide assistance beyond the reach of conventional care providers, helping you keep hold of your independence.
Call or email for a chat today.
0774 703 0014
enquiries@bettertogetherservices.co.uk
Better Together

The Will Writing Partnership
Wills | Trusts | LPAs
Is it time you should be thinking about your Will and Lasting Power of Attorney?
To discuss all these matters and any related concerns you may have, please call Sue on 07850 426 774
Email: sue.wells@twp.co.uk Visit: www.twp.co.uk

ClassicCarpentry
Friendly Service, Free Estimates, Quality Work
All Internal & External Carpentry Insurance Work Undertaken
Dave Terry
0121 445 1574 or 07970 966470
www.classic-carpentry.co.uk
classiccarpentry@hotmail.co.uk

MARTINI EXECUTIVE TRAVEL
A professional executive private hire business. From our Alvechurch office, we drive our customers all over the UK.
For whatever your travel needs
Business meetings, Airport & cruise transfers, Family events, Holidays & tours, Sporting events & concerts, Weddings
For a quote, or to book your reliable, professional transfer now:
Email: martiniexecutivetravel@gmail.com
Tel: 01675 770 121 Visit: www.martinitravel.co.uk

Village Directory

CTB ALARMS LTD
YOUR LOCAL ALARM COMPANY
• Alarm Installations • Alarm repairs
• Alarm system servicing
• Upgrade/Modernisation of alarms
24/7 response • 25+ years experience
t: 0121 716 7375
e: sales@ctbalarms.co.uk w: www.ctbalarms.co.uk
Cheekatrade.com
Texecom & Honeywell approved
Company reg number: 06164927

D.J.SCRIVEN ROOFING CONTRACTOR
DAVID JAMES SCRIVEN - ROOFER
TILE / SLATE / LEAD / TRADITIONAL ROOFING
NO JOB TOO SMALL - FREE QUOTATIONS
160 SIR HILTONS ROAD, BIRMINGHAM B31 3NW
TEL: 0121 291 9452 07845 268 841 07841 684 547
Email: scrivenroofing@gmail.com
Facebook: DJScriven Roofing Contractor

REVIVE
ROOFING & BUILDING SOLUTIONS
Built on trust and reliability, we have been in the roofing business for over 30 years.
Our services include:
- New slate and tiled roofs
- Flat roofs
- Chimneys
- Velux roof windows
- Repointing
- Roof timberwork
- Solar panel installation

And more. . . including all aspects of roofing work!
www.reviveroofingandbuildingsolutions.co.uk
Mobile : 07854623592 | Office : 0330 043 6806
Email : John@reviveroofingandbuildingsolutions.co.uk

The Village
. . . is hand-delivered to 10,000 homes across this lovely area.
To reach our very large audience call us on: 07536 987950

Windmill Hill Care
Domiciliary Care & Support Services
Consultants to the Care Industry
Independent home care agency owned and run by an experienced Registered Nurse
Traditional, bespoke, person-centred care
Safe, caring, effective, responsive and well-led
Registered with the Care Quality Commission
Contact Jackie Grant on 0121 448 3348
jackie@windmill-hill-care.co.uk
www.windmill-hill-care.co.uk

On track computers Ltd
computer engineers · you can trust
Which? Trusted trader
Mike Nash - Qualified - Local - Friendly
Mobile Computer Engineer – will visit your Home or Office
■ Virus & Spyware Removal ■ Wireless Broadband Set Up/Repair ■ All Computer Hardware Repair ■ Laptop Screen Replacement
Tel: 0121 445 2065
Email: helpme@ontrackcomputers.co.uk
www.ontrackcomputers.co.uk
Serving Barnt Green & surrounding areas for over 15 years

Roberts Bespoke Joinery
FURNITURE & TRADITIONAL JOINERY
- Hand-made kitchens
- Free-standing and fitted furniture
- Specialist joinery
- Design and fitting service

The Workshop, 3 Bear Hill, Alvechurch B48 7JX
Tel: 0121 447 8017
www.robertsbespokejoinery.co.uk

T.S. Electrical
Domestic & Commercial
Property/Landlord Inspections
Full & Part Rewires • Fuse Board Replacements
Alarms Fitted • PAT Testing • Part P Certified
TRUST MARK
01564 823882 / 07974 829794
Lilley Green Road, Alvechurch

www.chrischipps.co.uk
TIMBER BESPOKE WINDOWS
For the future

CORNELL
Established Over 40 Years
Chimney Sweep
☑ Clean & Efficient ☑ Brush & Vacuum
Graeme Butlin
0121 445 5913 - 0754 587 6475
46 Oxford Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9ER

LogCo .co
Kiln-dried firewood & bags of smokeless coal ovals. Free delivery.
Coopers Hill Farm, Alvechurch B48 7BX
0121 447 7313 logs@logco.co

Poppins Home & Office Cleaning Services
SPECIAL OFFERS ON ALL SERVICES!
Poppins offers One-Off, End-of-Tenancy and Regular Cleans, Carpet & Oven Cleaning.
We also provide Laundry, Dry Cleaning and Tailoring with a Pick-up and Drop-off service.
BASED AT THE LAUNDERETTE IN ALVECHURCH FULLY INSURED
Mobile: 07891 899837 www.poppinsservices.com
1b George Road, Alvechurch B48 1PB info@poppinsservices.com

We Are Now Fully Open
ACS INTERIOR DOORS
Beautiful Interior Doors Supplied and Installed
Please visit our new showroom in Studley.
Unit 1
Ground Floor
Haydon House
Alcester Road
Studley
B80 7AN
07592 303104 or 07910 289565
www.acsinteriordoors.co.uk

Pledger Electrical Services
TRUST MARK
LOCAL ELECTRICIAN
NAPIT Part P Registered Installer
● Installations ● Maintenance & Repair
● Inspection & Testings ● Reliable Service
Call Dean: 0121 445 1601 or 07891 498909

City & Guilds Qualified
LICKEY CARPENTRY & CONSTRUCTION
Roofing, Floors, Kitchens, Doors, 1st & 2nd Fix
New Build, Extensions & Refurbishment
Domestic, Commercial and Schoolwork
CRB Checked & Fully Insured
Shop Fronts & Glazing
Dependable & Quality Service
Contact Paul on 07961 342304 / 0121 445 6236
e-mail:lickeycarpentry@hotmail.co.uk www.lickeycarpentry.co.uk
15 Cofton Lake Road, Birmingham B45 8PL

GET A FREE NO OBLIGATION QUOTE TODAY
SJ PAINTING & DECORATING
15 YEARS EXPERIENCE | INTERNAL TO EXTERNAL | ALL DECORATING UNDERTAKEN
07834 551921
sjpaintinganddecorating | sj_paintinganddecorating | sjpaintinganddecorating@gmail.com

Bridge club raises funds

A busy session: Bridge players in The Garrity.

BROMSGROVE Bridge Club's much anticipated event, Cafe Bridge, returned in October for the first time since before lockdown in 2019, to raise money for the Blue Cross to help rehome animals.

The charity event was attended by 44 players, who rotated around four venues in Barnt Green, playing bridge in each.

The game of bridge has been growing in popularity over the last few years, particularly at a social level. During lockdown, a number of people picked up the game, which can be played face to face or via a computer, and have since started to seek opportunities to play in bridge clubs. The club found that this year, there were a number of fairly new players to Cafe Bridge.

Mike Willoughby, who helped to organise the event, said: "Because of the social opportunities available to players, we're seeing more and more people wanting to learn to play bridge, which is very encouraging for the future of the game. And, of course, events like this enable us to support causes like the Blue Cross."

The players moved between four venues including The Victoria Inn, The Barnt Green Inn and The Garrity, playing a few hands of bridge in each venue, pausing for lunch in the venue they happened to be in at the time.

Many local shops supported the charity event by contributed prizes for a raffle.

Angela and Richard Wharton were declared winners of the event, with Barbara Griffiths and Mike Bell close behind. The non-expert prize was awarded to Heather Evans and Christine Griffin. The prizes were awarded by Neil Edwards, manager of Bromsgrove Rehoming Centre, who thanked the players and supporters including the venues and local businesses for raising over £1,250 for the Blue Cross.

Lunatips
NAILS AND BEAUTY
A friendly and relaxed salon in **Cofton Hackett**, we offer only the very best in products, treatments and customer service.
- Gel manicure
- Waxing
- Massage
- Facials
- Lash treatments
- Brow treatments
- IPL hair removal
- CACI treatments

www.lunatipsnails.com
0121 448 1811
lunatipsnails@gmail.com
@lunatipsnailsltd

LIFE COACHING THERAPY
Make a positive change
Alicia Benbow
Transformation Coach
NLP Master & EMDR
Clinical Hypnotherapist/ Psychotherapist
GHR Registered

Clear: Anxiety, Stress, Grief, PTSD, Panic Attacks, Phobias, Exam Stress
Improve: Confidence, Relationships, Happiness, Resilience
Email: alicia@lifecoachingtherapy.co.uk Tel: 07876 688497
www.lifecoachingtherapy.co.uk Life Coaching Therapy

NR Aesthetics & Skin
Nicky Robinson is a NMC registered Nurse & Midwife Prescriber providing Anti-wrinkle Treatments, Dermal fillers, IPRF Hair regeneration, Medical Skin Care, Microneedling, Profhilo skin boosters and Chemical peels

British Association of Cosmetic Nurses
Aesthetic Expert Complications Group
Call: 07843 047688
Email: info@nraestheticsandskin.co.uk
Visit: www.nraestheticsandskin.co.uk
Instagram&Facebook: @nraestheticsandskin

The Foot Place
A highly experienced chiropodist, who can help with ongoing issues and new problems, located in the centre of Alvechurch.
Relaxed surroundings
Friendly staff
Wide range of services
Late night opening
Book online
Accessible clinic
High hygiene standards
07885 796274 info@thefootplace.uk
www.thefootplace.uk

Advertise your business
If you have a health, wellbeing or beauty business and would like to advertise, get in touch today.
tel: 07536 987950
email: fran@villageonline.co.uk

At the heart of health

Dr Heidi Kerr and Dr Vicky Hobbs, from **VHK Women's Health Clinic**, explain the importance of looking after our heart and health, to help manage the menopause.

VHK WOMENS HEALTH

Heart health: Why cardiovascular health matters. *Image: Shutterstock.*

DURING the month of October, we celebrated World Menopause Day and this year's focus was around the important topic of cardiovascular health.

This is often an area that is not prioritised by women until they reach their 60s but the reduction of oestrogen during the menopause causes many cardiovascular and body changes to occur in the female body. Women often report a well-recognised change in body shape, but why this occurs and how to protect the heart during this time offers huge health benefits in the long run.

Cardiovascular disease remains the second highest cause of death for both men and women, second only to cancer which is often the more feared. Starting healthy changes at an earlier age, will have a cumulative effect on the benefits of living longer.

So how can women be heart happy?

The key aspects to heart health hinge around lifestyle modifications which also often benefit other aspects of health including menopause symptoms.

Looking at what you eat is key. High cholesterol levels increase the risk of increasing the amount of fatty deposits in the arteries which can lead to blockages to blood flow to essential organs such as the heart (leading to heart attacks) and brain (causing strokes and dementia).

Having a diet low in cholesterol and saturated fats, but still eating foods with good fats such as omega 3 fatty acids (e.g. oily fish) can help to lower cholesterol levels. Combining this with plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables and legumes also ensures you are getting fibre, vitamins, and minerals that the body needs. Having a healthy BMI reduces stress on the heart and lessens the risk of diabetes, a condition that doubles the risk of heart attack alone.

Everyone can calculate their BMI via the NHS website, and if your BMI is above 25 (considered overweight) or above 30 (obese) it would be wise to review your diet to avoid ultra-processed foods and snacks high in sugar, choosing instead whole foods, slow-release carbohydrates and fresh foods. Alcohol is also often seen as empty calories.

If you are a smoker, stopping smoking at any age will have a positive impact on the heart as well as your lungs. It can also improve sleep, reduce hot flushes and night sweats during the menopause.

Vaping is now becoming common place – but the evidence shows long term vaping also has a detrimental impact on the blood vessels increasing the risk of heart disease.

Regular exercise is hugely beneficial to heart and bone health, menopausal symptoms, and mental wellbeing.

Cardiovascular exercise such as a brisk walk, jog or cycle (defined as activity increasing heart rate for 150mins per week) increases body metabolism burning energy (calories) and releases endorphins to aid well-ness and lift mood. It can also reduce blood pressure. Having high blood pressure is an independent risk factor for heart disease and we would encourage all women to have their blood pressure checked at least annually to enable any high readings to be picked up and acted upon.

Like our diet, our exercise regimen should be varied to maximise the potential benefits to us. Resistance training with weights should become a focus in midlife. Muscle mass starts to decline in a women's 40's and doing exercise to maintain strength and avoid this, alongside exercises such as Pilates and yoga to benefit our core and pelvic floor.

So this autumn, as part of your menopausal journey think about your heart. Making small changes can reap big rewards and keeping to the right choices during the shorter colder days, will help protect your heart and therefore you.

At VHK Women's Health we can offer a full assessment and holistic approach to every woman.

To make an appointment with VHK Women's Health Clinic please visit: www.vhkwomenshealth.com

Lunatips
NAILS, BEAUTY, COSMETICS & TRAINING

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Book your Christmas appointments at Lunatips now!
Our appointments in the run-up to Christmas are filling up quickly, so book your festive pampering treatments now to avoid disappointment. From perfect party nails to silky smooth legs, we have you covered this Christmas.

Treat someone special to some pampering this festive season!

A **gift voucher** for one of our relaxing and luxurious treatments is the perfect gift for someone who needs a treat and wouldn't spend the money on themselves, or, if someone you know has treatments with us at Lunatips, buy them their next regular treatment with us.

We offer gift vouchers at all values, which can be used on any of our treatments, including:

- IPL Hair Removal
- CACI Non-Surgical Solutions
- Waxing Treatments
- Eve Taylor Facials
- Electrolysis Hair Reduction
- Gel Manicures
- A range of Relaxing Massages
- Hopi Ear Candles
- Pedicures and Foot Treatments
- Lash and Brow Treatments
- Advanced Cosmetic Blemish Removal

and more!

If you're not sure what to get your loved one this Christmas - try the gift of choice! You don't have to buy a specific treatment, with our gift vouchers, the lucky recipient can choose what treatment they spend their voucher on.

Visit us in store to find out more,
or buy your gift voucher directly today: www.lunatipsnails.com

CACI SKINCARE EVENT

Do you struggle with acne? Are you frustrated with signs of ageing?
At Lunatips, we can help!

CACI is a really popular non-invasive, anti-ageing and problematic skin solution. Here at Lunatips we combine our amazing CACI machine with beautiful **Eve Taylor** facial products to target:

Signs of ageing
Lines and wrinkles
Sagging jowls
Acne
Cellulite
Hydration
Pigmentation and stretch marks to name a few

Whether you have never heard of CACI before, or perhaps you have but are unsure what it is, why not come and join us at one of our CACI Demo and taster sessions to find out more?

We have two taster sessions running in November:
Wednesday 8th November from 6pm
Sunday 12th November from 10.30am
at our Lunatips salon, Lickey Road, Cofton Hackett.

Come along and watch a live demonstration of a CACI treatment being performed and have a taster yourself to really get a feel for it!

To secure your place we require a £25 booking fee which is redeemable off the fantastic course offers that will be available on the session days PLUS you will receive a **free goody bag** with every course purchased!

We have very limited spaces available so book your ticket today!
Tickets are available online now at **lunatipsnails.com** in our gift voucher section alternatively you can pop in or purchase over the phone

We very much look forward to seeing you there!

*If you do have any medical conditions please email or call the salon prior to online ticket purchase

Book now: 0121 448 1811 I Visit: www.lunatipsnails.com
Instagram: @lunatipsnailsltd I Facebook: lunatipsnails

A NEW HEALTH SYSTEM

Brand new, state-of-the-art healthcare and aesthetics clinic *REGENER8* opened its doors this autumn, providing revolutionary treatments in pain relief inlcuding physiotheraphy, expert nutritionist advice, and outstanding aesthetic procedures, all from their luxurious Barnt Green clinic.

THE way we think about our health is being rethought by clinicians at a new health centre in Barnt Green.

As well as treating the symptoms of pain and health problems, **Regener8 Healthcare** takes a holistic approach to treat not only the symptoms but the cause of medical and aesthetic issues, providing thoughtful advice and going above and beyond for their clients.

The brand new clinic, on Hewell Road, opened its doors to treat patients for a variety of issues from aesthetics procedures including Botox and laser hair removal to serious injuries including chronic pain, sports injuries and ligament damage (and many more) with their state-of-the-art equipment.

Regener8 was set up by Geri Savova, a specialist nurse, Neil Sullivan, an experienced physiotherapist, and Milan Mazic, who oversees the business and whose experience with injury planted the seed for Regener8 to grow.

Their idea for a clinic in Barnt Green followed a severe football injury to Milan's knee – which was also how Milan met Geri, who was working at the hospital Milan was being treated The couple now live in Barnt Green.

Milan, who currently plays walking football for England in the veterans team, found that after his operation, he had ongoing pain in his knee prohibiting him from playing.

After exhausting many different treatment paths, Milan discovered MBST treatment (Molecular Biophysical Stimulation Therapy, also known as magnetic resonance therapy) through physiotherapist Neil, who recommended the treatment.

Above: Justine (left), Milan and Geri welcome you to learn more about Regener8.

Right: Neil, Milan and Geri outside the brand new clinic.

Below: Milan holds the World National Cup.

The MBST treatment, which was provided at a clinic in Grantham, was a last-ditch attempt to cure his pain and get him back on the pitch.

MBST is a pioneering, non-invasive treatment which can be used for long-term pain relief and improving mobility for a range of issues such as spinal conditions, osteoarthritis. and pain in joints, ligaments, muscles and tendons.

"My life at home has been amazing since MBST therapy. I have my life back and can enjoy the outdoors once again"
- Client feedback

Geri, who is a nurse specialist with 30 years of experience, was sceptical at first, however it was soon evident that the course of MBST treatment Milan experienced changed the path of his recovery. Soon after his treatment, Milan was back to playing walking football, including at the recent veterans' World National Cup.

As advocates of MBST treatment and with Geri looking to branch out with her own clinic, they were keen to provide this treatment, alongside other services, in Barnt Green.

Geri's experience combined with their business partner Neil's extensive career as a physiotherapist, which has included working as the senior physiotherapist at Derby County Football Club for 13 years, springboarded them into business, and they set out to provide a wide range of services, for diagnosing conditions, providing services to improve physical and mental health and a holistic approach to healthcare.

Geri explained: "At Regener8 we treat our clients using functional medicine, treating them from the inside, out. For example, we look at the cause of inflammation in your body, and the factors which could be impacting that such as stress, hormones, anxiety, chronic disease and treat you as a whole, rather than just the symptoms."

The team believe in providing outstanding care, and have experts in a wide range of fields such as a nutritionist, and a private GP service.

In addition to treatments for pain and medical conditions, Regener8 is a clean, and comfortable space for aesthetic procedures. Carried out by experienced and qualified nurses and therapists, the clinic has invested in brand new equipment and offers services including Syndeo hydrafacials, Soprano Titanium laser hair removal and Cryopen treatment which removes skin tags, warts, and age spots (and more).

Regener8's nutritionist, Cain Leathem, is one of the country's leading nutrition consultants who has more than 30 years experience working with elite athletes and complete beginners as both a personal trainer and nutritionist and as a professional speaker.

Combined with treatments like their IV vitamin infusions and ZO skin care, Regener8 is the place to go if you are searching for a way to feel better in your skin.

With so much on offer at the clinic, there's never a dull moment for Clinic Manager Justine Roden who manages the day-to-day running of the clinic. With more than 30 years' experience, she is passionate about providing outstanding service to clients and ensures that booking appointments is as stress-free as possible.

When you call to book an appointment or to find out more about one of the many services at Regener8, she'll be able to direct you and give you further information about the different options available to you, and will take care of booking your follow up appointments and any further treatment you may need.

The three Directors at Regener8, Milan, Neil and Geri, bring together a varied and in-depth knowledge of medical and aesthetic treatments, and a belief that the services Regener8 provide, can improve your quality of life, as Milan himself will attest

You can find a full list of available treatments and services on the Regener8 website.

DO YOU KNOW THE SIGNS OF PROSTATE CANCER?

November is known for the awareness and fundraising campaign "Movember".
At Regener8 we are dedicated to raising awareness of and diagnosing serious illnesses, quickly and safely with as little stress to you as possible.

Book your Wellness Health check today for peace of mind. We aim to see all clients as soon as possible, your health is our priority.

Suffering from chronic pain? Explore MBST treatment. After an initial consultation, you will be booked in for a course of treatment, which uses magnetic pulses (like an MRI machine), to treat pain and improve mobility. In a calm, hygeinic setting at Reger8, you can even watch Netflix while you're being treated.

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY
Call: 0121 820 5197 | Email: info@regener8.healthcare
Visit: www.regener8healthcare.co.uk

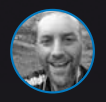
ppm financial planning
ppmfinancialplanning.com

ENOUGH

How much money do you need to sell your business for?

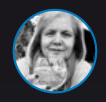
Meet the Team

When you become a client at PPM Financial Planning you do not just acquire an adviser, but a team of professionals who all know your story and have their own integral part to play in bringing it to life



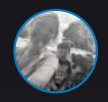
Martin Pryor
Financial Planner & Adviser

Business & Finance degree to Graduate training course at Prudential, leading to becoming a qualified independent financial adviser in 1996 and setting up PPM Financial Planning in 2006.



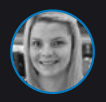
Nicky Lowndes
General Manager

Nicky has been at PPM Financial Planning since the very beginning in 2006 bringing with her 19 years of banking experience with HSBC.



Laura Siddall
Financial Planner & Adviser

Laura has 19 years of industry experience. Her role is to construct financial plans for clients using our cash flow modelling software, helping deliver true financial planning.

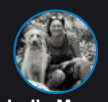


Laura Daniels
Mortgage Adviser

Laura joined in 2016, providing admin support whilst completing training to become our qualified mortgage broker.

Louise Wheeler
Paraplanner

Louise Joined PPM in September 2021, bringing with her 8 years of paraplanning experience and 13 years working within financial services.



Jodie Morey
Office Administrator

Jodie joined PPM from an accountancy background and performs a variety of tasks in the day to day running of the business.

ppm financial planning
ppmfinancialplanning.com

PPM Financial Planning
Lifestyle & Financial Planning | Financial Advice
Pensions | Investments | Tax | Protection

Head Office: The Needle Factory, British Mills, Albert Street, Redditch B97 4DA
Tel: 0121 445 5694 **Email:** enquiries@ppmfinancialplanning.com
Web: www.ppmfinancialplanning.com

Registered as a Limited Company in England and Wales No. 05839628
PPM Financial Planning is a trading name of Pryor Portfolio Management Ltd who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
Pryor Portfolio Management Ltd Financial Services Register Number is 511176.

Mind your own business

Martin Pryor explains how small business owners are ideal clients.

BEFORE we start to explain why small business owners are our target clients, we must first say that we get great pleasure in helping anyone create a financial plan to achieve their financial freedom.

We like working with business owners because, first and foremost, I am a business owner, which adds to our qualification in speaking to other business owners about their exit strategy.

We believe we add real value because many business owners wrongly position their business within their financial plan. Most rely on their business sale to provide for that financial freedom. We regard that as high risk. How many business owners suffer from trend changes, legislation changes, competition which means that they don't get the sale they wanted or, worse still, needed?

We position to clients the question: does your business generate enough net profit to allow you to fund your own financial freedom and therefore be financially free of a business sale? Often the answer to this is that there is not enough margin in the business to fund their financial freedom.

The reply to that is that you are not charging enough. We use the British Airways example to demonstrate the importance of pricing into the cost of your widgets, products or services the value of your own financial freedom.

You have to look closely, but in the bottom right hand corner of the ticket are the words: "Ticket price includes the cost of retirement of Pilot and Cabin Crew."

If you build your retirement into the cost of your business then the business will fund what you need to be financially free, which takes away the risk of a disappointing sale price or, worse still, no sale at all. In my 25-plus years' experience, I've found that many business owners build into the price of their tickets/widgets/service the cost of their staff, their premises, their heating, lighting, stationary, toilet rolls, but most fail to build in the cost of their own future!

This is where your Lifestyle Financial Planner comes in. They can help you make sense of it all. They will help you work out "How much is ENOUGH?" They'll also help you utilise your business to accumulate money each year in the most tax-efficient ways possible.

Always remember that until such time as you physically sell your business, if you include it in your financial planning – if you believe that one day that money is going to come into your bucket – then you are planning to be financially DEPENDENT on that business.

Personally, I'd rather help people to plan to be financially independent WITHOUT relying on the future sale of a business. That's because businesses and business sectors have a nasty habit of suffering from changing fortunes over time.

Look around your own local area at the successful businesses that once were! In the UK, what about those local, friendly DIY stores – completely wiped out by B&Q (of course, only the outstanding ones have survived, such as Tonys Handyman!). Or those high street book and record shops whose death was Amazon and Spotify.

If you can plan on being truly financially independent (ie, without being reliant on the future sale of your business) you can then become detached from the outcome. Something amazing then happens. This will result in a higher sale value, even though you don't really need it! More importantly, it will result in less stress for you and your business, it just becomes icing on the cake.

Finally, many business owners under-use the services they already pay for, which is their accountant. Most owners use their accountant to reflect on what has passed and forget to ask them advice on the future.

Our most powerful planning sessions with business owners are when we combine the client's annual accountancy meeting with their future financial planning meeting with ourselves. There are obvious overlaps of advice and rather than noting these overlaps as action points to bring up with their planner or accountant they can efficiently be dealt with there and then, it really can be powerful stuff.

If you've got a business, then your accountant – working alongside your Lifestyle Financial Planner – can be your greatest resource.

Between them, the two professionals can help you make your business sing and dance. They can help you understand what it needs to look like, operate like, smell like, taste like – so you have every chance of building your business so one day you can sell it. And, if you can't or don't want to sell it, between them, they'll help you accumulate all the money you need – your ENOUGH – in the most tax-efficient way possible via your business.

Remember, your business is your "vehicle". Its purpose is simple: to help you to get to your ultimate destination – ideally with you and your family enjoying the trip along the way! If you want to find out more then give us a call and book in an initial free no obligation consultation.

Martin Pryor
Lifestyle Financial Planner

For more information, please contact us

Tel: 07961 162818
martinpryor@ppmfinancialplanning.com
www.ppmfinancialplanning.com

The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate Tax Planning This article should not be regarded as personal advice. You should seek independent financial advice to apply these theories to your circumstances.

Light at end of the mortgage tunnel?

Mark Meads discusses how **Village Financial** ensures clients get the best deals for their mortgages.

OVER the past few months we have seen a lot of turmoil in the mortgage market, interest rates have been rising steadily and many have been concerned about the increase in mortgage payments.

We are now seeing a steadying of interest rates, with many lenders starting to reduce fixed rate deals.

As a result the value of a mortgage broker has never been more important: we can work with you to ensure we lock you into the best deal to suit your circumstances, even if your current fixed rate maturity is six months in the future.

We can then monitor rates to see if any better opportunities become available before the new deal goes into effect.

Whether you are buying a new home, remortgaging or even investing in the Buy to Let market, we will sit down with you and assess your current personal circumstances and plans for the future then look to find a mortgage that is not only competitive, but also meets your short and long-term needs.

We work from a comprehensive panel which is representative of the whole of the market.

Mark Meads (right), is here to help make sure you are on the right path with your mortgage.

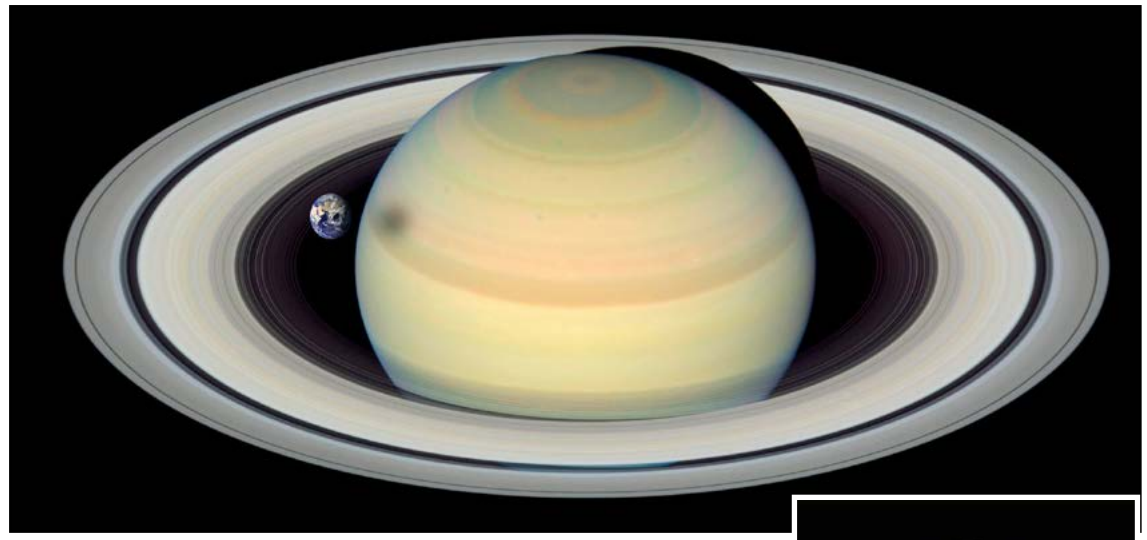
And rest assured once you become a client of ours we will be there every time your existing deal matures, we will contact you well in advance and ensure you get the right deal for your circumstances, at that point in your life.

Giving you peace of mind in challenging times!

If you would like an initial discussion to see how we can help, please contact us on: 0121 445 1227.
Or contact us through our website: www.villagefinancial.co.uk using the QR code

Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage

Dark skies at tea time



Amateur astronomer **Brian Watkiss** peers into the *Village* night sky.

AS we stare into November, and look forward to celebrating the anniversary of the foiling of a plan to blow up the House Of Lords four hundred years ago, on the 5th, we can see the Sun setting just after 4pm in the afternoon. This means really dark skies just after tea and very interesting skies they are.

Looking towards the south, high above us is the Summer Triangle, which I may have mentioned before. It is very obvious, as is the Square Of Pegasus to the left.

The number of stars that can be seen within this square is a measure of the amount of light pollution and sadly, not so many are visible in Alvechurch nowadays.

Between these two formations and halfway down to the horizon, is that most beautiful planet, Saturn.

It really is a treat when seen through even a small telescope. It is the second largest planet in our Solar System and nearly 10 times as wide as our Earth.

It rotates very quickly, taking just under eleven hours to go round once. This causes it to bulge out in the middle (rather like some people I know) even though it is really just a big ball of gas (ditto).

It is mostly made up of hydrogen and helium so is not very dense and would, in fact, float in water. It is most famous for its rings, made up of tiny particles of rock and ice. Look out for a crescent Moon nearby on the 20th.

Further to the left and very obvious because it is the brightest object in the sky, is the planet Jupiter. It is the largest of the planets, having a diameter about 11 times that of the Earth and is also mostly made up of hydrogen and helium but there is an awful lot of it.

There has been a storm, known as the Great Red Spot, raging in the atmosphere for at least a couple of hundred years which is so large it could swallow the Earth.

Being half the distance from us than Saturn, Jupiter shines brightly in our skies and looks amazing when the Moon is close by, as it will be on the 24th and 25th.

With the full moon on the 27th, our largest planet will be the only other thing visible in this part of the sky.

Top: A comparison of the Earth and Saturn.
Above: The Earth-swallowing Great Red Spot.
Pictures courtesy of NASA.

On the other hand, the new moon is on the 13th so a couple of days later is a great time to be looking out for meteors (or shooting stars) of the Leonid meteor shower. This are caused by dust and minute particles left in the trail of the comet Tempel-Tuttle which comes around every 33 years or so. There is no specific place to look, just find the darkest bit of sky and spend some time staring into space.

However, don't bother looking at the sky on the evenings of the 23rd to the 25th. . . instead, head for the Village Hall to see the Dramatic Society taking some very odd steps.

A CHILLY COME-DOWN

Alvechurch amateur weatherman **Phil Thomas** records the changes.

THE beginning of September gave us settled, sunny and warm weather – finally the summer we had all been waiting most of July and August for.

The maximum temperature on the 8th was the warmest September day in my 30 years of keeping records, reaching 28.8C.

It did however, become more changeable into the second half of the month, with 12 days of rainfall throughout, accounting for 82% of the average.

Following this changeable weather, the first 10 days of October were very dry and warm, with an average temperature during this period of 15.2C. That's an amazing 4.5C warmer than it should be. . .

However, from the 11th of the month, temperatures dropped by more than 10C on average. This made the weather much wetter. There was a very wet spell between the 11–13th with 42mm rainfall in total during that period.

The seasons seemed to change quickly from warm start to the month suddenly became very chilly with a maximum of only 10.5C recorded on the 16th. Autumn well and truly arrived in a hurry.

A very wet spell in the area occurred on the 19 and 20 October. This rainfall isn't included on the tables to the right, which record up to the 18th October, however I felt it worth adding here. In the 24 hours preceding 9am on the 20th there was 45.2mm of rainfall, most of which fell in the morning of the 20th, causing local flooding with lots of surface water.

The Outlook

THE majority of the upcoming weather seems likely to be dominated by Atlantic depressions, bringing wet and windy conditions to the South-west and West, although spells of high pressure may bring some longer, drier interludes later in the month.

Rainfall may be higher than average at first but as the period progresses, more seasonal weather patterns will dominate, with wet weather seen in the West and drier conditions East.

As we'd expect it will get cooler later into November when blocking high pressure and easterlies are more likely, but as temperatures fall particularly over Europe, any winds from this direction may bring colder spells as the month progresses.

Shepherd's Delight: A good sky at night.

Above: Cobwebs glisten in the morning sunshine.

September 2023

Mean Max	21.1C	2.6C above average
Mean Min	12.0C	2.2C above average
Mean	16.5C	2.4C above average
Rainfall	53.9mm	82% of average
Sunshine	135.5hrs	106% of average

October 2023 (to 18th)

Mean Max	17.1C	2.8C below average
Mean Min	9.3C	2.2C above average
Mean	10.5C	2.5C above average
Rainfall	54.2mm	65% of average
Sunshine	55.9hrs	54% of average

More information at ***www.alvechurchweather.metsite.com*** You can see an improved HD weather-cam, updated at one-minute intervals, at: ***www.alvechurchweather.metsite.com/webcam_alvechurch.php***

The entrance to the Old Orchard in Barnt Green.

FOLLOW THE TREES

Mary Green takes us on one of her biodiversity walks, from Barnt Green through the Old Orchard.

I'M writing this amid the emotional response to the cutting down of the Sycamore Gap tree in Northumberland. I'm not the only person to say that we British are rather sentimental about nature. We grieve this tree, but cut down others routinely all the time.

Sycamores especially are not prized because they aren't pretty: they are cut every day because they spoil someone's view, cast shade on their gardens or make a mess on their cars. Their saplings are routinely grubbed up from ornamental woodland in favour of trees with nice leaf colour. They are flailed off in hedges all around us every year. And we might wonder why this tree was on its own like that – we already removed all the other trees that must have grown around it once. I hope it makes people think about this.

My biodiversity walk this month is from Barnt Green, a good one in autumn but also in spring. It takes us

continues overleaf

continues from previous page

up the Blackwell Road alongside the railway and into a space called the Old Orchard. Parts of the footpath were closed earlier this year but are open again now.

Barnt Green grew around the railway, and you can't miss the presence of trains on this walk.

My thanks to the people who came on my biodiversity walks here recently – some of our discussions are included here.

Start anywhere in Barnt Green and walk up the right-hand side of the Blackwell Road out of the village.

As soon as you leave the last house, wild flowers begin to grow by the roadside, then a path appears which rises slightly into the trees. This takes you along a little ridge between the road and the railway. I feel this ridge should have a name, so if anyone knows it, please let me know.

The ridge is a little hidden gem, a remnant of ancient woodland. There are some old trees, and the presence of bluebells in spring and dog's mercury even earlier confirm it.

The old oaks are especially good, as they have been allowed to grow to their natural shape so their branches dip down to the ground.

I have just been reading that an old oak in Lincolnshire has been voted the "best climbing tree of the year" because its branches come right down to the ground and enable you to get up into the tree.

It's very sad to see how many oaks have had lower branches cut off. Trees have a natural shape and should be able to grow into it unless there is a really pressing reason to cut them off, or the tree is being properly coppiced or pollarded.

Among the smaller trees are several young sweet chestnuts. There isn't a big one here, but I suppose there was once, or they were planted. The young ones are thriving.

Sweet chestnuts do quite well round here but aren't very common. There are ancient ones in Pipers Hill wood near Bromsgrove and a couple of small stands a few miles from Alvechurch. This year they have flowered well, but I don't think we've had enough heat and sun for them to ripen fully. These here are too small for fruit yet.

Oak on the ridge: Old oak branches dip low across the path.

Lichen grows on the trees: indicating tree age and health.

There are some very attractive silver birches. They are quite fast-growing trees and younger than the oaks.

By the time you read this, the oak and birch may have changed colour and look spectacular, though I think experts on trees aren't expecting the leaf colour to be at its best this year and may come very late. There is plenty of holly too, the females having good berries.

Under the trees are non-flowering plants – bracken and other ferns. Bracken gets a bad press, possibly because it is unwanted in "improved" farmland, is not eaten by livestock and grows strongly. But it is a plant of old woodland and old verges, and very attractive in spring with its unfurling fronds and in autumn with its golden-brown leaves.

Bracken: golden brown leaves.

Scots Pine: Growing tall on the ridge.

Bracken was used much more in the past, when it was cut and used for bedding, wrapping, covering, mulching, as a fuel, to make soap – all kinds of uses. Because of this it was controlled, seen as a benefit not as a nuisance. It is a host plant for ticks, which are part of our biodiversity but we don't want them on us! There are other ferns too, and the trees have varied mosses and lichens on them showing their age and good health.

There are many flowering plants in spring, most notably bluebells, but also wood anemones and stitchwort among others. You won't see these in the autumn as they've died back down, but you can tell that the undergrowth is not "just grass."

Smaller shrubs here feature both broom and gorse, similar bushes of yellow flowers.

Gorse is very prickly and the flowers have a lovely scent a bit like coconut. It's said to bloom somewhere all year round – "when gorse is in bloom, kissing is in fashion". Broom is smooth and straight.

Neither are common round here, growing more on moors and mountains where there is acid soil. I think this is the case here - there are several acidic outcrops on the edge of the Lickeys.

Broom is of course the plant from which brooms were made. At one time the plant was called broom, and the implement was called a besom or a broom besom, then later just "a broom". Its stiff but flexible stems make it perfect for this when dried.

Bracken likes acid soil too, as do the birches and the occasional Scots pine trees here. These pines would have been introduced as they don't naturally grow in the midlands, but they obviously like it here. You can usually tell Scots pines from the non-native ones by the reddish bark.

In the old orchard: Apples grow on the trees.

Many of these trees and other plants are closely related to particular fungi which form networks under the soil. Most of these we never see but they are there helping the plants with their chemical conversion: absorbing carbon and fixing it in the soil, giving out oxygen, getting nutrients from decaying matter and putting them back in to the soil.

But some of the fungi have fruiting bodies that pop up so we can see them.

This ridge is one of the places you can see some very diverse ones, if the conditions are right.

One I've seen here is the iconic red-with-white-spots fly agaric, not common round here but found mostly in birch woodland. It's very poisonous but has been used as a hallucinogen, especially in Nordic countries where it is said to get reindeer inebriated. It was also used as an insecticide, hence its name. Legend has it that witches "flew" after eating them – no doubt on broom besoms!

Also here I have found a lovely specimen of the cep or penny- bun mushroom. This is a bolete, a type of mushroom with spongy tubes underneath instead of gills. This one is round and brown as its common name suggests. It's edible and delicious. There are other boletes too, such as the bay and birch boletes, that may be here. Many of them are edible but unfortunately some kinds of bolete are poisonous. You may also find the more common shaggy caps and the brown wood mushrooms.

Icronic red and white: Poisonous fly agaric fungi.

Bolete mushroom: A type of penny-bun mushroom.

Spot shaggy cap fungi, more common in the area.

It's worth looking on the trees themselves, to see if there are any bracket fungi such as birch polypore, which grow directly from trees.

You may see the aptly named jelly

continues overleaf

continues from previous page

ear on elder or the black bulgur and King Alfred's cakes on dead wood. We saw one of these black ones here recently.

At the far end of the ridge, turn right on a bridge across the railway and follow the footpath past a house to the Old Orchard.

Have a good look at the hedge you walk along after the house. It's a great example of a proper old hedge: it has almost every kind of native tree, including a lovely big birch, and has been allowed to grow fully so it is full of berries and seeds in the autumn. It also has a good patch of the less common polypody fern. You will see next year's catkins (flowers) already on the hazel trees.

In the Old Orchard you can walk round in a rough triangle on footpaths though they are a bit harder to follow since the ground was disturbed for vehicle access recently.

This has also damaged some of the plants of old pastureland that were here, such as betony, but they may come back. Already the damaged areas are being overtaken by a little yellow flower called tormentil, which has always been here and clearly likes the empty soil!

There are some spectacular old fruit trees, mostly apple but one big pear tree too. They have lovely blossom in spring, when the ground around them is full of bluebells showing the age of the undisturbed ground.

You will probably still find windfalls around in November, being pecked at by blackbirds and other birds. The ground was full of them earlier in the autumn.

There are some huge old oaks here too, with spreading branches, and plenty of young ones. Natural woodland is regenerating here around the fruit trees.

As well as tormentil and (I hope) betony in late summer, the grassland in the orchard has good Friday grass (field wood rush) in April and pignut in May. I have found the lovely little black chimney sweeper moths on the pignut here.

The orchard is a haven for insects and for birds. By November the birds have gone quiet but you should hear robins and woodpigeons, and there may be redwings feeding on the berries.

The walk is not very peaceful due to the proximity of the railway, road and motorway, but the habitat is good and the trees will do a lot to absorb the pollution we cause.

If you want a longer walk, there are footpaths from both far corners of the Old Orchard leading across fields and tracks to Linthurst Road, making a circular walk.

■ **This is another poem (right) which sprang from a walk to the Weighbridge.**

In spring: Bluebells and stitchwort on the ridge.

Blue Moon

Walking towards the music in the soft twilight
A bat flitters, and I think: it's a long time
Since I saw one, a good night, blood-warm
Insect-crowded, my heart flittering along the towpath.
Walking back full of the sound of strings and voices
The moon comes behind me out of a cloud
And I remember this is a blue moon.
For a long time I thought "once in a blue moon"
Meant never, like "till all the seas run dry my love."
But they are real, ordinary, a trick of the calendar
They come on days like today, lighting my steps
Glinting on the tideless water, making night visible.
I am going to collect blue moons and store them:
The sound of a young woman singing old as time,
The sight of an elephant hawk-moth caterpillar,
The train that runs on time where I want to go.
The stranger who taps my shoulder and thanks me
For a random word of help the day before,
People who lend skilled hands to my old brain
Struggling in its pre-tech analogue moonlight,
The great nephew's photo of his new daughter
Who they've named, not knowing, after her Celtic tree
Hazel, the tree of the old moon calendar
Of magic and divination, the name flittering
Like a bat, coming to rest in a new life.
Autumn is full of plums and roses, unexpected sun,
And I am safe against the winter cold
My blue moons wrapped around me like a cloak.

The anonymous birder

How to enjoy village birdlife

STARLING SERVICE

AUTUMN sees an influx of starlings to the UK where the soft ground conditions allow them to feed throughout the winter.

Like many other birds, its plumage changes depending on the season. They will develop white spotting on a spectacular iridescent green background.

They are another bird given to roosting en masse.

Although a common or garden bird their winter pre-roost flight known as a murmuration is one of the most spectacular sights in the natural world.

Once commonplace in the UK, large murmurations are now relatively rare but still can be seen in various locations e.g. Brighton Pier, Somerset levels etc.

Seeing a proper starling roost is on every birder's bucket list and I finally got to see mine in the most surprising setting – a multi-storey car park in Redditch town centre.

Word had got out that a murmuration was occurring so a group of us drove to the car park for dusk waiting expectantly on the open top floor, level with a stand of Leylandii trees.

Individual feeding parties started to gather from all points and eventually morphed into a single entity of thousands of birds.

The sound from the wave was as spectacular as the shape-shifting flock. Suddenly, the gathering lowered and poured down on to the trees like liquid through a funnel.

Keep an eye out for starling flocks. Even if they don't develop into a full-blown murmuration they will still roost in groups particularly liking Leylandii.

A murmuration in an unlikely spot.

If you do see something unusual on your travels or in your garden remember it's all relative and when you start out everything is a possible rarity, (however, if you read my article last month – it doesn't make you a twitcher). **JL**

Where to find a Wassail

YOU might remember the photo on the right, it was one of the front covers of *The Village* earlier this year. The Green Man led a procession of villagers through the streets of Alvechurch for a Wassail, organised by the Aelfgythe Border Morris group.

Wassails are traditional festivals held in winter, believed to promote a bountiful harvest for the coming season and scare off malevolent spirits who may cause crops to fail.

Alvechurch, Lickey and Barnt Green (and more) all hold Wassails in the colder months, bringing the community together for a traditional celebration.

Each Wassail will have its own traditions, at some "Kings" and "Queens" of the harvest are crowned, Morris sides and dancing groups perform, Mummers plays are enacted. At most Wassails, plenty of noise is made to make the festival's presence known to evil spirits (including some traditional chants of "Waes Hael, Drink Hael"), and food can be hung in trees as offerings of sustenance to benevolent spirits to bless the harvest.

Wassail festivals are a good example of how the area are upholding traditions of village life.

The team at Aelfgythe Border Morris are now organising their annual Wassail event which will be on Saturday 3rd February.

Previously this event has included different styles of Morris dancing from local sides and a procession through the village to the "Wassail tree".

Expect joyous dancing, healthy noise (needed to wake the tree), heritage, singing, poetry, and the Green Man. There will also be the opportunity to enjoy a glass of your favourite beverage along the way.

If you'd like to join in with a Wassail this winter, watch this space as more information about upcoming celebrations will soon be available.

The Green man leads a procession through Alvechurch.
Picture/*Mark Easter*

Hopwood TREE SERVICES
Devon Finney
Tree Surgeon
NPTC Qualified
Fully Insured
Specialist in all aspects of tree work:
Felling, removal, topping, thinning, reductions, pollards, lifts, cut backs, tree inspections • STUMP GRINDING
24-hour emergency service
For a free estimate and advice, call 07800 532690
hopwoodtreeservices@hotmail.com

JPP Landscapes
Full Garden Landscapes
Fencing & Patios
Drive & Patio Cleaning
Aquatic Specialist
07971 341 444
JPPLandscapes@Outlook.com

ALVECHURCH
TREE CARE & LANDSCAPING LTD
NPTC qualified tree surgeon
Fully insured
ALL ASPECTS OF TREE SURGERY UNDERTAKEN
- Stump grinding
- Hedge cutting
- Landscaping
- Grass cutting
For a free no-obligation quotation call Neil: 07834 554710 or 07791 697007 Email neil@alvechurch-treecare.co.uk

LAWNWISE
Professional Lawn Care
SERVICES
- LAWN RENOVATIONS - LAWN TREATMENTS -
- WEED & MOSS CONTROL - RESEEDING -
- SCARIFICATION - AERATION - TOP DRESSING -
- TURFING - WILDFLOWER SOWING -
07773 563231 www.lawnwise.uk facebook

Make the Most of Your Garden
LINDSAY STANTON
Garden Design
Creative designs for all types of garden approached with a flair for planting and sensitivity to owners' requirements.
Over 20 Years Experience
T: 0121 445 2364
E: lindsaystanton@btinternet.com

Garden Landscaping & Maintenance:
Driveways, Patios & Decking
Lawn Mowing
Fencing & Gates
Hedge Cutting
Garden Clearance
Hopwood Garden Services
0121 445 1253
or
0751 7367663
www.hopwoodgardenservices.co.uk
info@hopwoodgardenservices.co.uk

To advertise your gardening business or service in The Village, Call us on: 07536987950 or Email: sales@villageonline.co.uk

IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS...

THIS autumn, Curious Cubs, a children's outdoor playgroup in Barnt Green, next to Barnt Green Sports Club, celebrated its second birthday.

Cubs founder Kirsty Edwards invited *The Village* along to one of their play sessions to find out more about the group and how they are encouraging children to get back to basics, creating culinary delights in the mud kitchen, experimenting with water and testing a range of gross motor skills and problem solving on the 'risky play' area.

Previously a secondary school PE teacher, Kirsty was passionate about seeing children flourish and watching their self-confidence blossom.

In Curious Cubs, Kirsty aimed to create a space where children could be children, she said: "It's important we continue to instil a love of the outdoors with young children instead of returning back to the screens, after the pandemic."

Desperate to get the children out of the house and off screens? Barnt Green stay and play group *Curious Cubs* offers children the opportunity to get out in the fresh air and learn about the natural world through play, writes **Francesca Peach**.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a key driver behind Kirsty's idea for Curious Cubs, she said "During lockdown we spent majority of our time as a family out-

continues overleaf

side, either on our daily walk around Alvechurch or in our garden.

"Our eldest, who was two years old at the time, loved our daily adventures and playing in the garden with his mud kitchen, paddling pool or 'helping' with the gardening. During the pandemic, I think we all felt for ourselves and understood the importance and benefits of being outside."

My own daughter is two and like many toddlers, can be a little apprehensive at first when entering a new playgroup. However after just a few minutes, she was off, the pirate ship having caught her eye (followed swiftly by the telephone booth, the mud kitchen and the water play!).

Each week, Cubs has a different theme which the activities are based on; recent themes have included farms, pirates, dinosaurs and rainforest.

Kirsty explained: "We change the theme of the session so there is always a variety of activities and a way for the children to learn a little about our celebrated days and seasons. My personal favourite themes are the autumn ones, I love all the natural resources around, and Christmas. It's a beautiful time of year to be outside in the morning."

The Cubs session we attended was "In the garden" and activities included a vegetable patch for children to pull up and plant carrots, onions and potatoes, and a potting tray. My daughter took great delight in filling compostable pots with soil and then overflowing them with water.

Alongside the themed activities are Curious Cubs staples such as the construction site, the mud kitchen, a pirate ship and a risky play area with balance beams, bunjee ropes and a slide.

We learned that in addition to the obvious benefits of getting outdoors, the wide variety of activities children take part in at Cubs promotes different learning opportunities; gross and fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, risk assessment, role play, creative, imaginative, physical development.

For myself, and for my daughter, the idea of getting out of the house and playing outside on mornings that might be dull, grey – or even pouring with rain – is refreshing, and Curious Cubs certainly gives that push. By the end of the session Isy was covered in mud and water and proud of herself for how she walked the plank in the risky play. As for me, I would much rather be washing muddy clothes than pristine ones.

Talking to Kirsty, it's evident that she is passionate about providing a space for both children and a support network for parents and carers as well.

Curious Cubs teaches children a huge range of skills, and there is much to get involved in. The sessions allow children to get back to basics, back to nature. Kirsty said: "It's about being outside, immersing themselves in the wooded surrounding, listening to the trees and birds, feeling the different weathers on their skin. Its been proven that being outside reduces stress, too!

"There is a saying that 'it's a wondrous thing how the wild calms the child'."

Out in the fresh air: Giving orders from the pirate ship.

Wecome to the club: Curious Cubs founder Kirsty Edwards.

The mud kitchen.

Exploring risks: Kirsty's sons experiment on the risky play area.

Above: A smiling face pokes out of a den.
Right: Exploration on the activity table.
Below: The vegetable patch and construction are.
Bottom right: Water play.
Bottom left: Geting up close to nature.

For more information on **Curious Cubs** and how to book a session:
Visit: curiouscubs.co.uk
Instagram: @curiouscubsplaygroup

Reeves Tree Surgeons
PROFESSIONAL & AFFORDABLE
• All tree and hedge work undertaken
• We will leave your garden to your satisfaction
• Fully qualified & insured for your peace of mind
• Local authority approved contractors
• We care because we want your repeat custom
01527 874143
Email: info@reevestreesurgeons.co.uk
www.reevestreesurgeons.co.uk

The Gardeners Guild™ COLLECTIVE MARK QUALIFIED GARDENERS
WINTER BLUES SETTING IN?
Don't despair! There's plenty still to do in the garden to keep it looking bright
IT'S THE PERFECT SEASON TO RESET AND REST...
Now's the time for: specialist rose & fruit pruning, prepping the veg beds, mulching the borders, getting those sheds & greenhouses in order... and we can help!
WORRIED ABOUT YOUR PLANTS?
With over 10 yrs experience in a Botanic garden setting, you can trust that we have great plant knowledge & you'll get a high quality finish
And yes, we're fully insured!
Book your free garden visit with Leighanne
07749 509934
lanny@fernnfurl.com
Unfurl your idyllic space.. and unwind

WHAT'S ON GUIDE

***The 39 Steps*: The upcoming zany whodunit.**

ALVECHURCH DRAMATIC SOCIETY ON STAGE AGAIN

ALVECHURCH DRAMATIC SOCIETY presents their next production *The 39 Steps*, by John Buchan and adapted by Patrick Barlow from the film by Alfred Hitchcock.

This fast-paced whodunit is for anyone who loves the magic of theatre. The society describe *The 39 Steps* as a mix between a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, with a dash of Monty Python.

When man-about-town Richard Hannay pays a visit to the theatre, little does he know that a chance meeting with a mysterious damsel in distress will lead him on an adventure spanning the length of the country, as he seeks to unmask a devilish conspiracy.

This production promises thrills, spills, a cast of zany characters, an onstage plane crash, handcuffs, missing fingers and some good old-fashioned romance!

The show will run from Thursday 23 November until Saturday 25th November at 7.30pm, held at Alvechurch Village Hall.

Tickets are £8, concessions tickets are £7, and are available from The Lounge, Alvechurch; or by phoning/texting 07977 140088. You can also email ads.alvechurch@gmail.com

EVENTS

A CHRISTMAS FAIR will be held on Saturday 2nd December at 11am-2pm in Holy Trinity Church, Rose Hill Lickey B45 8DJ. £1.00 admission to raise funds for the Christmas Shelter and church. For more info please contact alisonjr59@hotmail.com

Alvechurch Village Hall will be holding a CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE on Sunday 12th November between 10am-4pm. Admission is £1, and proceeds will go towards the Village Hall.

THE MIDLAND SINFONIA'S next concert is "Tis the Season" on Saturday 2nd December in The Ark St Laurence Church, Alvechurch. An evening of Winter including both Vivaldi & Glazunov's 'Winter', Debussy's 'The Snow is Dancing' and music from Rimsky-Korsakov's opera 'Christmas Eve'. Doors and bar open at 7pm for a 7.30 start. Tickets: £15 (£3 students & under 16) on the door (card or cash). In advance £13 (and £3) from www.midlandsinfonia.co.uk, Gin & Pickles & The Lounge in the Square Alvechurch. Find out more at: www.midlandsinfonia.co.uk

MUSIC

ALVECHURCH COMMUNITY CHOIR usually meets in Alvechurch Village Hall on Mondays at 7.30pm with occasional pub and outdoor sessions and a live stream. The choir is inclusive and open to everyone, whether you think you can sing or not. For more information or to join or book them, see their website www.alvechurchcommunitychoir.org.uk. They will be in Alvechurch Village Hall on 6 & 27 November, with sessions at the Crown Inn on 13 & 20 November. On 2 December, they will be singing at the lights switch-on in Alvechurch and afterwards at the Baptist Church.

BEOLEY VILLAGE HALL hosts live music, comedy, cinema and jazz nights. On Wednesday Jazz nights the bar opens at 7.45pm, with entertainment from 8.15pm. For Friday night events, the bar opens at 7pm with entertainment from 7.30pm, and on Saturdays the bar opens at 7.15pm with entertainment from 8pm.
For more information and details, contact Paul on 07973 759340 or Richard 01527 66646. The programme is subject to change if the circumstances dictate.

THE ASKLEPIOS ORCHESTRA will host their Autumn Concert in St Andrew's Church, Barnt Green, B45 8NR on 10 December 2023. The event will start at 7.30pm and the interesting programme includes Kay - An American Overture (arr. Armstrong), Parker - A Northern Ballad, Weill - Lady in the Dark medley (arr. Armstrong), Shore - Fellowship of the Ring Suite (arr. Whitney), Williams - Theme from Schindler's List, Gershwin - An American in Paris (arr. Armstrong).
Admission is free, with a retiring collection.

You are warmly invited to come along to support them and bring your friends.
Their Spring concert will be held on Sunday 24th March.

BEL CANTO SINGERS, the well-known 4-part Worcestershire choir, are back to rehearsals at St. John's Church, Greenlands Avenue Redditch B98 7PZ on Monday evenings. They are always happy to welcome new singers. They have a very wide and varied repertoire and a huge catalogue to include pop, fun pieces, musical theatre, jazz, folk music and traditional choral and classical mu sic along with much more. Bel Canto Singers are a friendly and social group, under the guidance of Musical Director, Liz Green and accompanist, Wendy Quirk.
They are a non-profit making organisation and select a new charity each year to support both financially and with provision of their services. Just turn up at rehearsal on Mondays at 7.30pm where there will be a wide range of singing activities, light refreshments and chat. More information please contact Secretary Veronica Porter 07885 507899 or visit www.belcantosingers.org.uk

THE GEMINI Choir is seeking new singers. Info from Philip Morris on 07969 741137.

BLACKWELL Concert Band and Training Band is open to all brass and woodwind players of all abilities. To learn more about the band, book them, or find details of upcoming events, email blackwellconcertband98@gmail.com or visit www.blackwellconcertband.co.uk

SINGING For Health is a group aimed specifically at people with health problems, mental or physical. Face to face groups have now resumed, meeting on Wednesdays 2-3pm at Longbridge Retirement Village and Thursdays 2-3pm at St Chad's Church, Rubery (£3 per session). Everyone is welcome!

BROMSGROVE Music Centre runs FREE weekly string orchestra, concert band and beginner group Lift Off! sessions for young musicians. . New members always welcome! Sessions are run by Severn Arts at St John's Middle School, Bromsgrove, on Mondays 5.45–6.45pm Individual instrumental lessons are also provided at the centre. For more info, see www.severnarts.org.uk/music-centre-groups

BROMSGROVE Folk Club meets on the second and last Thurs every month at Catshill Club, starting at 8pm. For a full list of events call Bob Bignell on 0121 476 5938 or see www.bromsgrovefolkclub.co.uk

BROMSGROVE Rock Choir offers everyone the chance to sing pop, rock and chart songs – no audition needed. Free taster sessions available. More info at www.rockchoir.com or on 01252 714276.

BROMSGROVE Community Choir meets on Thurs evenings, 6–7 pm at Bromsgrove Methodist Church (main church hall). They sing for fun and enjoyment; everyone welcome, singers or not. Contact Ruth Henley for details on 01527 527022 or 07812 145267, or email r.g.henley@btinternet.com

DANCING

TANGO ARGENTINO at Barnt Green Quakers/Friends Meeting House on Saturday mornings and Thursday evenings. For further information: www.facebook.com/groups/tango42/announcements (no Facebook account needed).

AELFGYTHE Border Morris is seeking new dancers (female) and musicians (male or female) to join them for fun, exercise and dancing. They meet at 7.45pm every Weds in Alvechurch Baptist Church Hall. Everyone welcome. Come and play traditional folk music, or try Morris dancing. For more details call Pam on 07961 830 831.

FRENCH & Breton folk dancing meets at Alvechurch Village Hall on the first Sat each month from 2.30–5pm (Covid-dependent, so please check first by emailing alvechurchfrenchdance@gmail.com). Informal tuition and live music provided. New dancers (and musicians) welcome. £2 per session.

SEQUENCE Ballroom and Latin dancing every Mon evening at 8pm at the Longbridge Social Club, 1012 Bristol Road South, Northfield. Occasional free tuition. All welcome to a friendly fun-filled dance. Details from Kalvin on 07725 265024.

ALVECHURCH Morris Men are on the lookout for new dancers and musicians. They practise on Mondays at Alvechurch Baptist Church Hall, 8.30–10pm, followed by a "debrief" at a local hostelry. They dance in local towns and at various local and national events, and perform a world-famous (sort of) mummers play in the village every New Year's Day. No ability, fitness or co-ordination required – if you are male, 18+ and prepared to spend more time than is probably good for you in public houses, pop along to meet the group! Drop in to any practice, contact Steve on 07375 592928 or email: alvechurchbagman@gmail.com

NANCY Butterfly Morris Dancers dance in the North-West Morris style (clogs!) and practise at Catshill Methodist Church Hall on Monday evenings ready to meet up with other Morris sides for social events and festivals. They are very happy to welcome new adult dancers and musicians. See: www.nancybutterfly.co.uk or Facebook for what they get up to. You can contact them via the website or Jane on 07726 915289.

AVONCROFT Folk Dance Group enjoys anything from barn dances to ones seen in *Pride & Prejudice* or *Poldark*. All welcome, no need to have a partner. The group meets every Thurs from 8–10pm at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Redditch Road, Bromsgrove B60 4JR. £2.50 incl refreshments. Info from Liz Stanton on 01905 353995 or liz@the-stantons.uk or visit www.avoncroftfdg.weebly.com

BJ's BUSY Boots Line Dancing Classes: Tues 2–3pm Bromsgrove Leisure Centre; 7–10pm Stoke Prior Sports/Country Club. Thurs 1.15–3.30pm Bromsgrove Methodist Church Centre. Social Dance usually 1st Sat in month at All Saints Church Hall, Burcot Lane. It's a fun way to exercise. For more details phone Brenda on 01527 870151.

AMY GREAVES SCHOOL OF DANCE & Fitness offers a variety of classes for toddler up to adults. Based in Hopwood, Bournville and Longbridge. Contact 07979408997 amygreaves1@hotmail.co.uk www.amygreavesschoolofdance.com

SEQUENCE dancing every Tuesday evening at 8pm at Fairfield Village Hall, Bromsgrove. Welcoming and friendly atmosphere, all levels welcome. For further details please contact Joyce & Len on 0121 682 3266.

DANCE AND FITNESS at Bournheath Village Hall including Adult Zumba, Pilates and Stretch classes as well as KS1 and Baby Ballet. For more information message 'Dance With Nikki' on social media or n.foulkes@hotmail.co.uk

LINEDANCE CLASS, every Thursday between 6pm - 7pm at Extracare Longbridge Village. Contact Bryan 07975569065 for details.

BEGINNERS LINEDANCE class, Tuesdays 6pm - 7pm at West Heath Community Centre, Hamstead House, B31 3QY. Contact Bryan 07975569065 for details.

NEW SALSA dance classes, every Thursday at the Alvechruch Inn, B48 7LD. Doors open at 6pm. Beginners classes at 7pm, with the main class at 8pm. All classes are £9 each or both classes for £15. Come on your own or with friends. Contact 07779686679.

BALLROOM/LATIN SEQUENCE dance some line dance held on the first Friday of the month (check just in case Friday has to change because of commitments in the village) from 8pm -10.30pm at Extracare Longbridge Village, B31 2FZ. Contact Bryan 07975569065 for details.

CLUBS, GROUPS & SOCIETIES

ST GODWALD'S Community Cafe meets every other Fri from 10am–noon at St Godwald's Room adjacent to the Church Hall, Finstall Road, Bromsgrove. Friendship, cake, tea/coffee. Donations welcome— monies to St Basil's charity for homeless youngsters. More info: davidrowe876@btinternet.com

BROMSGROVE Men In Sheds is a group for anyone (male or female) who has retired or been made redundant and wants to spend time with like-minded people. The group meets Mon–Thurs, 10am–2pm at Unit 1, Metals & Ores Industrial Estate, Stoke Prior B60 4JZ. You can find more information by calling 01527 570490 or email enquiries@ageukbrwf.org.uk

BARNT GREEN QUAKERS invite you to their autumn film screenings. Admission is free however donations are welcome. Full details can be found at The Meeting House, 6 Sandhills Rd, Barnt Green.
On 17 November at 7pm it will be a comedy starring Helen Mirren, where beautiful people make beautiful food in the south of France. Cultural barriers are broken.
On 15 December at 7pm the film will be the last Ealing Comedy: Five oddball criminals planning a bank robbery rent rooms on a cul-de-sac from an octogenarian widow under the pretext that they are classical musicians.
On 11th & 12th November between 2.30-4.30pm there will be a Quaker Service Memorial Exhibition over Rememberance Weekend.

PLACES OF WELCOME is a growing network of local community groups who provide their neighbourhoods with places where all people can feel safe and where they can connect, belong and contribute. The network is open in St Laurence Church and The Ark on Wednesdays 10.30am-12pm, all are open to everyone and offer friendship and hospitality, free refreshments and local knowledge about the neighbourhood. Visit www.placesofwelcome.org.uk or email info@placesofwelcome.org.uk

REDDITCH Military History Society usually meets monthly in St Luke's Church Hall (Evesham Road, Redditch, B97 4JX), 7 for 7.30pm. More info from Ron on 01527 545450 or ronnieg33b@hotmail.co.uk

FRIENDS Of Bittell Reservoirs is a group of local people interested in preserving the natural environment of the Site of Special Scientific Interest at Upper Bittell, Lower Bittell and Mill Shrub reservoirs, which are

continues overleaf

continued from previous page

important staging posts for migrant birds and wildlife. If you have an interest in preserving this unique environment and would like to help in its preservation and maintenance, contact: Charles Deverill on cdjd26@gmail.com

ALVECHURCH VILLAGE SOCIETY runs a regular programme of social events and guided walks, as well as maintaining local footpaths. Talks and social events are held in the Village Hall, unless otherwise noted. Entry at talks and AGM is free for members and £1 for guests, including a drink and biscuits. Litter picks start at 10am. from the village square. Other social events are by ticket and details of venue, start time and price will be published by the organisers nearer the time. .
On Wednesday 15 November, the talk will be "The evolving life of a freelance musician" with live music by Shulah Oliver, Artistic Director of The Midland Sinfonia, and colleagues. The Alvechurch Village Society Christmas party will be held on Saturday 16 December, including a ceilidh by The Orchard Band. This will be a ticketed event, details will follow nearer the time. AVS is always pleased to welcome new members—contact Martin on 07742 100007 or martinclarke1@btinternet.com.

REDDITCH Community Shed is a project that encourages skills, combats loneliness, and provides a sense of worth in people who are retired or otherwise wondering what to do with themselves. They have a small woodworking work shop in the Kingfisher Centre just outside Primark and they are open Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Call in for tea and biscuits and a look round. More details at www.RedditchCommunityShed.co.uk or on FaceBook. If you're in Redditch of a Tuesday or Thursday they would be pleased to see you.

THE MONDAY Fellowship group meets at the Parish Centre behind St Andrew's Church in Barnt Green at 2.30pm on the second Monday every month; £2 to include tea and biscuits and an interesting talk. Info: Maureen Frowley on 0121 445 0880.

INNER WHEEL Club of Redditch welcomes you to its monthly meetings on 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Southcrest Hotel Redditch. An international Women's Organisation, they enjoy a bit of everything; walks, talks, days & evenings out, and everything in between whilst at the same time helping the community. Contact Anne Robertson for information 07580351361. Or email redditch.innerwheel@gmail.com or visit www.innerwheel.co.uk

BROMSGROVE U3A: No longer in full time work? Activity/interest groups and speaker meetings are happening throughout the month. Check website for details: www.u3asites.org.uk/bromsgrove/home

BROMSGROVE & Redditch Welcomes Refugees is a group of volunteers supporting local refugees who arrived under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Relocation Scheme (SVPRS). New volunteers always needed – training and support given. BRWR is open to all, irrespective of political or religious belief. Full details at www.brwr.uk

CATSHILL Carers and Bereavement Back Up Group is a group set up specifically to offer respite, socialising and occasional speakers to carers and bereaved in the area. It meets on the last Tues each month in the coffee bar area of Catshill Methodist Church Centre in Golden Cross Lane from 2.30pm for about 1.5hrs. All carers and bereaved welcome, as well as those who used to care for someone who has passed away or is now in a care facility. Tea and biscuits/cake provided – no charge. Contact Sheila (0121 445 2813) or Di (0121 445 3595) for details and encouragement.

BROMSGROVE Speakers Club meets at The Barn at The Bell at Belbroughton every other Tues, 7.45–10pm. Everyone who wants to gain confidence in public speaking is welcome, but you must book in advance via www.bromsgrovespeakers.org.uk, which also contains full details of events.

RE-ENGAGE (formerly Contact the Elderly) aims to help isolated elderly people by offering monthly tea parties where they can reconnect or make new friends in their own community. If you know of an elderly person who could benefit, please get in touch on 07539 276054. Guests need to be aged over 75 and living alone, and must be mobile enough to walk to a driver's car with assistance. Find info at www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk or on Facebook @ ContacttheElderlyRedditch

AGE UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire have a free Dementia Café at Finstall Village hall. It is a free social hub aimed at people with dementia, their families, and carers in Bromsgrove and the surrounding areas. It takes place every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 10.30am-12.30pm.

BROMSGROVE Photographic Society is a friendly, active and mutually supportive club for those keen to learn about, or improve, their photographic and digital imaging skills. The growing membership has skills ranging from novice to highly skilled, within wide-ranging subjects. The club meets on Tues nights, 8-10pm at Avoncroft Arts Centre. For more info, visit www.bromsgroveps.com or see Facebook and Twitter.

ROTARY Club of Bromsgrove meets every 2nd Tues of the month at Maekong Thai Restaurant, and every 4th Tues at Bromsgrove School, both 7pm for 7.30pm. New members welcome. For more info visit www.bromsgroverotary.org.uk or contact Ron Pearce on 07703 567982.

HEART Of England Speakers is a friendly public speaking club, based in Solihull. It is affiliated to Toastmasters International, and meets on the 1st and 3rd Tues of each month, 7.30—9.30pm, at the Silhillians Sports Club and Events Centre. If you would like to boost your confidence get in touch via www.heartspeakers.org.uk, Instagram @ toastmastersheartofengland, or via LinkedIn.

REDDITCH Rotary Club meets Monday lunchtimes at the Abbey Hotel, Hither Green Lane, Redditch, B98 9BE. You would be very welcome to join in. Want to be involved, hear interesting speakers, and serve your community? Want to know more? Contact Peter Williams on 01527 60277.

LICKEY PHAB Club is a social club where people aged 14 and over, with and without disabilities, can come together each week to have fun! It is affiliated to national charity Phab. The club meets every Mon from 7.30–9.30pm at The Trinity Centre, Lickey Parish Hall to have fun, play games, do crafts or just chat – there's also a tuck shop! More info from Louise Boother on 07814 122990 or lickeyphabclub@hotmail.com

BEACON Ladies Club meets at 8pm on alternate Weds evenings at The Hawthorns Social Club, Rednal Hill Lane, Rednal. There is a varied programme of speakers and outings, including occasional visits to the theatre. New members of all ages welcome. £12 annual membership, plus £2 fortnightly. Call Barbara on 0121 445 3456 or Anita on 445 3770.

BARNT GREEN FRIENDSHIP CLUB meets every 3rd Tues of the month at 2.15pm at the Friends Meeting House, Barnt Green. Visitors £3 to include tea and biscuits. Members 50p. Ladies and gents both welcome. For more details call Rosalind on 0121 445 0598.

THE WORCESTER-BIRMINGHAM & DROITWICH CANALS SOCIETY holds regular monthly meetings in the meeting room behind The Weighbridge Pub, Scarfield Hill, Alvechurch on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.45pm. There is usually a guest speaker.

BIODIVERSITY WALKS

MARY GREEN'S next biodiversity walks will be on Wednesday 22 and Saturday 25 November at 10.30am. These are slow easy walks to look at areas of good habitat for wildlife around Alvechurch. Meet outside the Crown at Withybed Green. The walk takes about two hours.

They promote the upkeep of the canals to ensure that the heritage is looked after for all to enjoy and are a registered charity. Find out more: www.wbdcs.org.uk or Facebook @ wbdcs.org.uk. or email contact@wbdcs.org.uk. Non-members are welcome. Free entry.

ALVECHURCH WEDNESDAY CLUB usually meets on the second Weds each month, and offers the chance to make new friends, meet old ones and enjoy talks, demos and visits. Their November meeting will be on the 8th November and this month they have the wonderful Max Keen, who will be entertaining us with his take on "Pirates... Myth and Fact". They expect they will end the afternoon knowing a lot more about pirates and having had a good laugh along the way! Come and join them for the talk, meet their friendly members and make some new friends.

COFFEE, Cake and Chat is a place to meet new friends or catch up with old friends (includes a dedicated baby area) on the 4th Friday of each month 10:30am - 12pm at The Wheel, Blackwell. No charge, donations welcome. More info on 0121 445 1425.

LICKEY Hills Local History Society meets monthly at 7.30pm in the Trinity Centre, Old Birmingham Road, Lickey B45 8ES. Annual subscription £15. Non-members £3 per meeting. For more information please email: info@lhlhs.org.uk or visit: www.lhlhs.org.uk

BROMSGROVE (1982) PROBUS Club provides opportunities for retired and semi retired men to meet socially. A members meeting is held at Avoncroft Arts Centre on the 3rd Wednesday monthly 10am until 12pm, including refreshments and a talk by a guest speaker. Other regular activities include monthly walks, lunches including partners, snooker--, social outings and IT. For more info visit www.bromsgrove1982probus.weebly.com or contact Martin on 07717 150136.

BROMSGROVE & Redditch Soroptimists meets every 2nd Thurs of the month at Burcot Village Hall. New members welcome – pop to a meeting, email sibrsoroptimist@gmail.com or ring 07812 985927.

ALVECHURCH Historical Society has a planned programme of talks on the first Monday of the month at 7.45pm at The Ark, St Laurence Church, Alvechurch. More details from Anne Humphries on 0121 445 5955. New members welcome.

KINGFISHER PROBUS Club of Redditch is re-cruiting retired and semi-retired men to join them in a friendly environment. They meet every 2nd Thurs of the month at 11.30am at the Court Leet,174 Worcester Road, Bromsgrove B61 7AY, with a short meeting at noon then lunch followed by an interesting talk given by a visiting speaker. Partners/friends welcome to join for walks, trips, golf, skittles and special lunches. Contact Chris Bailey on 01527 835802 for confirmation of date and venue. More info at www.kingfisherprobusredditch.co.uk

BROMSGROVE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at Bromsgrove Rugby Club. Doors open 7.30pm, speakers begin 7.45pm. Admission free on your first visit; refreshments available. Observing meetings are also held on the first Monday each month – bring your telescopes. More info via www.broms-astro.org.uk, www.facebook.com/bromsastro or emailing info@broms-astro.org.uk

ROTARY CLUB of Lickey Hills meets on Monday evenings, 7.15 for 7.30pm, at Hillscourt Conference Centre (NASUWT headquarters) on Rose Hill (B45 8RS). For details contact Graham Wiseman on 0121 460 1402.

SILVER THREADS, the Alvechurch club, meets on the first Weds each month at 2pm in Alvechurch Village Hall. You'll be sure of a welcome in this friendly atmosphere, where members can chat over a cup of tea. There are regular bingo sessions, and occasional days out. New members welcome. More info from Pat on 0121 447 8630.

WOODRUSH RUGBY Club "Old Dogs" meet at 8pm on the 2nd Thurs in the month at the Clubhouse, Icknield Street, 01564 822878. Open to all former players, social members and old friends for a social chat and the odd reminisce over a glass of beer. Join us: call Mike Betts on 07960 303254 or visit www.woodrushrfc.co.uk or info@woodrushrfc.co.uk

The North Worcestershire Association of the NATIONAL TRUST hold monthly meetings with interesting speakers on 3rd Thursday 7.30pm at Tardebigge Community Hall, also walks, outings and an annual holiday. For further info email Ros257@yahoo.co.uk

Bromsgrove & District AMATEUR RADIO CLUB meets every Friday evening from 7.30pm at Avoncroft Arts Centre. The club is open to anyone with an interest in Amateur Radio. More details from the secretary Alan on 07886 000052 or secretary@bromsgroveradioclub.co.uk

COMMUNITY COFFEE morning - open to all. Free refreshments and chat. Wednesdays 10-

continues overleaf

continues from previous page

12 at Barnt Green Baptist Church. Enquiries can be made to: events@bgb.org.uk

THE MACULAR Society Barnt Green Support Group meets on the last Fri of the month (with some exceptions) at The Parish Centre, behind St Andrew's Church, Sandhills Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NR, 2–4pm. Friendly, self-help group, proving there is more to life than this devastating eye condition. New members always welcome. For more info, ring Wendy on 0121 445 1585 or Alan on 01527 877864.

SPORT, FITNESS & HEALTH

UPTON WARREN SAILING CLUB sails throughout the year at Aztec (Upton Warren) opposite Webb's Garden Centre, Wychbold. A small, friendly club with both mixed fleet racing and cruising sessions. Most members sail their own boats but there are also club boats available for members to use. See www.uwsc.co.uk to find out more or contact membership@uwsc.co.uk

JOOLISM HIIT CLASSES. Semi-PT resistance training for ladies only in a well-equipped gym in Bromsgrove. For ladies who want toned and strong bodies. Attendance must be pre-booked via julie@joolismfitness.co.uk

WOODRUSH RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB, Icknield Street, Alvechurch, B38 0EL is recruiting: Senior (Men & Ladies) U17 Colts Mini/Junior & Micros. Call 07341 256821 for recruitment or 01564 822878 (Clubhouse) email info@woodushrfc.co.uk or see: www.drushrfc.co.uk Facebook @WoodrushRFC

ALVECHURCH VILLAGE SOCIETY'S WALKS are held at 2pm of the first Sunday of the month unless noted otherwise. For walks starting outside the village, please contact the walk leader if you need a lift. Occasionally, weather conditions mean that a walk must be cancelled at late notice: check with the leaders or the AVS website if unsure. Always wear appropriate footwear. Contact walks organiser Tony Brannon for more information about the walks: avswalks@gmail.com
The next walk will be on Sunday 5 November, led by Tony Brannon "Arrow Valley Country Park". Meet at Washford Lane car park, B98 0HY. Contact 07763468893 for further details.
The following walk will be on Sunday 3rd December at 2pm, led by Gerard Nash around Spernal & Coughton Court. Contact 0121 445 4454 for more details. Meet at Haydon Way Wood car park B80 7EX

BARNT GREEN FISHING CLUB controls the fishing (both game and coarse) on the Bittell Reservoirs. Interested parties - contact: bgfcmembership@outlook.com or Facebook @Barnt Green Fishing Club.

REDDITCH & Bromsgrove Company of Archers meet April–Sept, Mon 6.30pm and Fri 6.30pm at Meadow Park Football Ground (by Harris Brush Works – outdoors) and Oct–March on Fri 6.30pm at Studley Leisure Centre (indoors). Really friendly no-pressure club. New members always welcome (juniors from 8 years old, seniors from 18 to 80+, seasoned archers or absolute beginners).
Beginners' courses run throughout the year or taster sessions by appointment.
Further info from rbcoaCoach@gmail.com, rbcoasecretary@gmail.com, or www.redditcharchers.org

REDDITCH Ramblers is a growing, friendly and sociable group offering a full walks programme including walks every Sat and Sun and a midweek walk most weeks. Sun walk is usually 6–9 miles; the Sat walk is more challenging, usually 10–12 miles. Midweek walks vary, sometimes morning walks followed by option of lunch or full day walking. The Saturday Strollers walk fortnightly (4–5 miles). Newcomers are always welcome and can walk three times with the group before deciding if they want to join. The group also arranges holidays, coach trips and social events throughout the year. Full info at redditch.ramblers@gmail.com or www.redditchramblers.org.uk

PHYSIOTHERAPY-LED Pilates Classes in Cofton Hackett, Barnt Green and Lickey Hills. Mixed ability Daytime and Evening classes available. Mother & Baby classes also run by Women's Health Physiotherapists. Small and welcoming classes aimed to improve balance, muscle tone and posture as well as overall body strength. Contact Elizabeth on 07850 604425 or elizabethalexanderltd@gmail.com or see www.elizabethalexanderphysiotherapy.com

ALVECHURCH PARISH REMEMBERS

St Laurence Church, Alvechurch Parish Council and the Alvechurch Services Association have come together to plan a service for Remembrance Sunday. Representatives from our community have been invited to take part as Alvechurch Parish Remembers together.

Please note that Bear Hill will be closed to traffic up to Snake Lane between 10.30am - 12pm

On 11th November there will be no formal Act of Remembrance at Memorial Green, although you may wish to gather for a time of quiet reflection.

Sunday 12th November

St Laurence Church at 10.15am and at the Memorial Green from 10.45am.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY BRIDGE, AND MEET NEW PEOPLE?

IF the answer is "yes", then do attend a taster session at Barnt Green Bridge Club. They are a well-established, friendly club who meet each Wednesday afternoon throughout the year at St Andrew's Church Hall to play bridge in a welcoming environment. The only criteria is that you already have some experience of playing bridge.

They are keen to attract new members and you can use this opportunity to try the club before committing. If this appeals to you, don't delay – call John Waller (0121 445 1168) or Olivia Goodborn (07583 484065) who will be delighted to hear from you and to provide more details.

CLUBBERCISE@ Alvechurch: Get sweat and glow! Get ready for exercise in disguise. You'll be dancing yourself happy and sweating until you sparkle, without even realising it. Mondays 7.30–8.30pm at Alvechurch School. All places MUST be pre-booked via www.leeshfitness.co.uk or 07541 625939.

POUND FITNESS@ Alvechurch: Channel your inner rockstar with this full body cardio-jam session. Using Ripstix®, lightly-weighted drumsticks engineered specifically for exercising, POUND transforms drumming into an incredibly effective way of working out. Weds 7.30–8.15pm at Alvechurch School. All places MUST be pre-booked via www.leeshfitness.co.uk or 07541 625939.

MEDITATION CLASSES for Everyone. Come and try a KIND approach to Meditation and experience for yourself the revitalising power of a relaxed, calm, clear mind, whether beginner or experienced practitioner. Classes with community and an experienced teacher, at The Ark, Alvechurch, online or a mixture. REDUCE STRESS, FEEL CALMER, SLEEP BETTER. To join us for a trail contact Sally: www.MyYogaMind.co.uk, classes@MyYogaMind.co.uk, 07903 663085, F Sally My Yoga Mind

BARNT GREEN Sailing Club offers regular sailing, either racing or casual sailing, in beautiful surroundings at Upper Bittell reservoir. For info contact secretary@bgsc.uk or see www.sailingbarntgreen.com

BRIAR Rose Field Archers is a field archery club based near Bromsgrove. There are two qualified coaches for those interested in taking up the sport. For information contact briarrosefieldarchers@gmail.com

YOGA Really Works: classes on Thurs evenings (term-time only), 7–8pm at Cotteridge Quaker Meeting House, Watford Road. Six-week blocks £45. Slow and mindful rhythmic movement in time with the breath. Accessible venue— classes open to wheelchair uses and less abled persons. Contact George on 07490 781637 or yogareallyworks@outlook.com, see www.yogareallyworks.co.uk or on Facebook @Yogareallyworks

THE RAMBLERS Bromsgrove Group: Guided walking with our group for pleasure, fitness and fun. Full programme of walks / events throughout the year. More info at www.bromsgroveramblers.webs.com or call Martin on 01527 857117 or Peter on 01527 558203.

ALVECHURCH WALKING Buddies: join a regular local walk with like-minded people who simply want to go on a local, sedate and friendly walk with no pressure. Well-behaved owners and their dogs are very welcome. The group meets at 10.30am every Thurs. For more info, search for 'alvwb' on Facebook or contact Tony on 07763 468893.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL run a series of weekly health walks around Bromsgrove and its districts. The walks are usually steady in pace and led by qualified walk leaders, and free to attend. Where it exists, walks are often followed by guided sessions on the park gym equipment.
Blackwell Gentle Walk, Wednesdays, 10.30am, start opposite the entrance to St. Catherine's Church.
Lickey End Walking for Health, Tuesdays, 10am, meet at Lickey End Recreation Ground car park. Oakalls and Harwood Park Health Walk, Wednesdays, 2pm, meet at The Oakalls Play Area. Sanders Park Walk, Mondays, 9.50am for 10am start, meet at the café kiosk near the car park. There are three options: Short (30mins), Medium (2-3miles in 60-75mins), and Fast (3+ miles in 60mins).
Bromsgrove Rural Walk, Fridays, 9.45am for 10am departure, meet in the Sanders Park car park extension. These rural walks vary between 4 and 7 miles and can involve driving, a system of car sharing has been established.
Stoke Heath Health Walks, Thursdays, 10.30am, meet at Stoke Heath Recreation Ground. Wythall Health Walk, Wednesday, 2pm, meet at Wythall car park B47 6LZ.

SOCIAL TENNIS takes place at Rubery Community & Leisure Centre, Holywell Lane, Rubery B45 9AD on Mondays from 1–3pm. The group would welcome a few more players – just turn up or ring Don on 01527 759 318.

SARACEN Cycling Club is seeking new members. Men, ladies, beginners, and regular riders are all welcome. The long-established club meets regularly by the Tardebigge Pub on Thurs at 10am and Sun at 9.45am. See www.saracenroadclub.com or call Ivor on 0121 453 2287.

LONGBRIDGE Cycling Club meets weekly on Tues and either Sat or Sun. Ride pace generally at 9-11mph overall average, varied distances. Hotel and hostel weekends away, cycle camping adventures, social outings and much more. All ages, beginners, and seasoned cyclists all welcome. Call or text Deb on 07738 982161, email debweston@aol.com or see www.longbridgecyclingclub.com or Facebook @longbridgecyclingclub

MERCIAN NORDIC WALKING: come and try a taster session for fun, fitness and friendship. More info at www.merciannordicwalking.co.uk Online fitness and personal training available at www.mercianfitness.co.uk

PILATES with Steff Affleck (Rowney Green) Mat classes, apparatus 1:1 and duets. Irrespective of age, gender, health or fitness we could all benefit from understanding more about how to keep moving well. Joseph Pilates' system of exercise, using apparatus he invented, enables you to challenge what is strong, build what is weaker, exploring how you can balance the body to move away from pain and discomfort towards greater resilience and independence. Graduate of Pilates Professional Advanced Teacher Training; teaching Pilates for 17 years. Call 07759590830 or see www.steffaffleck.co.uk Mat classes and 1:1 (apparatus).

BARNT Green Sports Club (Margesson Drive, Barnt Green, B45 8LR) offers racquet sports in a friendly environment, plus running and cycling groups. Clubhouse with licensed bar. More info from Nick Butcher on 0121 445 1978 or visit www.barntgreensportsclub.co.uk

CATSHILL FC offers youth coaching sessions each Saturday morning at Catshill Middle School, Meadow Road, Catshill, B61 0JW. Boys and girls from Reception age upwards are welcome. Contact Gary on 07462 118920 or see www.catshillfc.co.uk for further info.

BROMSGROVE & REDDITCH Badminton Club welcomes players for social and league play.

continues overleaf

continued from previous page

Playing Sunday evenings 5.40 to 7.40pm. Details from Steve Whittaker 07805 051456.

PILATES with Lottie Newberry: Physiotherapy-led Pilates classes every Monday in Alvechurch in the day and Barnt Green in the evening. Contact Lottie on lottienewberrypilates@hotmail.com. All abilities welcome.

ACTIVE SENIORS Exercise Classes at Alvechurch Village Hall, run by Bromsgrove council on Fridays starting 9.15am, £5 per class. Contact g.peart@hotmail.co.uk orc on 07828 515344 for more information.

YOGA for Every-Body. Come and try a fresh approach to Yoga, that works with your body rather than against it. A slow-paced, yet powerful Yoga for EveryBody, whether beginner or experienced, flexible or wishing you were. Classes with community and an experienced teacher, at The Ark, Alvechurch, Blackwell First School, online or a mixture. MOVE BETTER, BE CALMER, FEEL GREAT! To trial a class, contact Sally: www.MyYogaMind.co.uk, classes@MyYogaMind.co.uk, 07903 663085, F: Sally My Yoga Mind

TAI CHI (Qigong) sessions in Alvechurch Village Hall on Mon 10–11am and Friday 10.30. Qigong is an integration of physical postures, breathing techniques, and focused intentions. More details Nige on 07966069956 or nige@mindfulmoves.co.uk

FIVE WAYS Old Edwardians' Cricket Club at Ash Lane, Hopwood: Junior, Men's and Women's teams, come and join in! Open to all. Excellent facilities. Everyone welcome. Coaching for juniors on Fri evenings May to Aug. Contact Mark Tovey on 01527 835031.

NEW Ravens (North East Worcestershire Ravens Rugby League Club) is now based at Forshaw Heath Lane, Portway, B94 5LH. Junior training and 'little leaguers' take place on Sun mornings from 10.30am, with open-age and touch on Weds evenings from 7pm. All welcome at this family-orientated club. Contact Gail on 07515 020844 or Jason on 07957 248464 visit www.newravens.net

KINGS Norton Rhinos offers contact and non-contact rugby for children from Reception to Year 12. A safe and friendly introduction to rugby – and plenty of outdoor fun and exercise! Training takes place at KNRFC Ash Lane, Hopwood, on Sundays from 9.30–11.30am. Contact Simon Thompson on 07968 424585 or visit www.knrfc.co.uk

HOPWOOD Ladies Cycling Club meets at Hopwood Playing Field on Tuesdays at 11.30am and Wednesdays at 9.30am. For information, visit www.hopwoodladiescyclingclub.co.uk or phone Sheila Evans on 07779 530017.

MARTIAL ARTS Kickboxing/Karate at The Ark Tuesdays 6.30-7.30. For more information please visit www.forcecombatmartialarts.co.uk

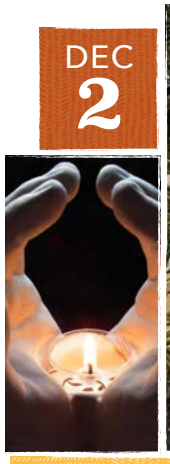
SLIMMING WORLD at Cofton Village Hall, on Wednesdays 9:30am, 5:30pm and 7:30pm.

ASSERTIVENESS AND HELPING SKILLS DONINGTON TRAINING runs classes at Alvechurch Village Hall. Easy, enjoyable and effective learning. Wednesdays from 19th January, pay what you think and can afford, any profits go to The Village Hall. For info: http://tinyurl.com/DTcdates or John Talbut (0121) 445 4607.

6 WEEK MEDITATION & MINDFULNESS COURSES to help you relax, find inner peace, and elevate your life. Join them on Wednesday evenings at The Friends Meeting House in Barnt Green or online whenever it suits you. Suitable for everyone! Enrol in the upcoming courses and discover how they've been changing lives at www.MeditationWithCoz.com or contact Coz at 07770067349. Follow on Facebook/Instagram: @MeditationWithCoz.

BARNT GREEN CHUGGERS & CHAINGANG provide run & cycling sessions for mixed abilities, those wanting to stay in shape plus those wishing to improve their running, cycling & fitness all in a social & recreational environment. Club Sessions - Chuggers (run) Monday & Wednesday 7pm and Chaingang (cycling) Wednesday 7pm & Saturday 9am all from Barnt Green Sports Club. For more info or to arrange a trial session please contact Membership Secretary kategallimore@googlemail.com

GENTLE EXERCISE CLASSES working on mobility, strength, flexibility and balance. Classes are very welcoming and inclusive and are held on: Wednesday's 1.30-2.30 at St Stephens Church Hall, Rednal and Thursdays 10am-11am Blackwell Community Hall, Blackwell. The cost is £5 per class. For more information call Lorraine 07866877881



DEC 2

CHRISTMAS FAIR

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
ROSE HILL LICKEY
B45 8ES

11.00AM-2.00PM

£1.00 ADMISSION TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CHRISTMAS SHELTER AND CHURCH

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

BABY Bounce & Rhyme is at Alvechurch Library Mondays 10–10.30am. Sing-a-long to traditional nursery rhymes and action songs.

STORYTIME at Alvechurch Library is on Tuesdays 11–11.30. Silly stories and tall tales for pre-school children to enjoy with parents and carers.

EVERY SCOUT GROUP in Bromsgrove (which includes Barnt Green, Blackwell, Catshill, Finstall and Lickey as well as the town centre) currently has girls and boys aged 6-18 waiting to join, their numbers restricted by the ratio of adults to young people.
A few more adults helping would enable existing leaders to open more Beaver, Cub, Scout and Explorer units allowing more young people to experience Scouting and learn skills for life. If you could spare a few hours each month please contact us on 07539 031740 or visit scoutshw.org.uk

CURIOUS CUBS: An outdoor playgroup promoting nature and learning through play. Sessions run on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays for walkers to five years. Based at Barnt Green Sports Club, Margesson Drive, B45 8LR. Visit www.curiouscubs.co.uk for more infomation and to book your place.

DRAMA TOTS: Award-winning imaginary play classes for children 18 months to 5 years. Classes run term-time on Monday mornings in Alvechurch/Thursdays in Finstall (other days/venues available). Contact Jo 07738 969460 for details.

TINY CHURCH (stay and play for under-5s and their carer) meets in Holy Trinity Church, Lickey, each Weds from 11.15am–12.30pm during term times. Games, toys, snacks and stories, and a time to meet together with God. Just pop along, ring 0121 445 1425 or email clive.rushton@btinternet.com

THE NATIONAL CHILDBIRTH TRUST (NCT) runs ever-popular antenatal and postnatal courses to grow your knowledge and your network, allowing you to feel prepared and confident moving into the next chapter of your life. Discover and learn with other local parents-to-be, make vital connections and life-long friends in your community. Courses are held at St Andrew's Church, Barnt Green. Visit www.nct.org.uk/courses-workshops or call 0300 330 0700.

SOLIHULL BABY MASSAGE is at Rowney Green Village Hall on Tuesday's. A relaxed environment for parents and babies to bond through massage. Visit www.solihullbabymassage.co.uk

RHYTHM TIME is a fun, award-winning developmental music classes for the under 5's. Classes in Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Bromsgrove, Redditch and lots more. Contact Vicky 07712 675 697 or visit www.rhythmtime.net

NEW ROAD PARENTS SUPPORT for parents of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans children meets monthly in Bromsgrove. A confidential, voluntary, small support group for parents by parents. Close links with FFLAG.
Visit www.newroadparents.org, email newroadparents@gmail.com or get in touch via Facebook @New Road Parents Lgbtqi+ Support Group.

THEATRETRAIN Bromsgrove, performing arts for children 4-18yrs. Saturdays 10.30am-1.30pm. For a half-price trial email bromsgrove@theatretrain.co.uk or call 07766 724834.

TUTORING both online and in-person for Maths KS1 and KS2. English KS1 through to GCSE. For more information message 'Tutoring with Penny' on Facebook or email penny_foulkes@hotmail.co.uk

PRE-SCHOOL BALLET - NEW for September 2023 Pre-school (2 ½ - 4 yrs) ballet held at Barnt Green Baptist Church on Monday mornings from 10 am. Contact dancingpointe@outlook.com for further details.

GAMES & COMPETITIONS

SHIRLEY & WYTHALL CHESS CLUB meets at Wythall Community Association in Silver Street, Wythall, B47 6LZ, every Thurs from 7.30pm. The club has four teams playing in competitive leagues. Friendly atmosphere. New players are most welcome, just turn up or contact Barry Knee on 01564 826250

MONDAY Bridge Club at Barnt Green Friends Meeting House meets on Monday evenings at 6.30pm. They would love to welcome new members. If you have played a little bridge in the past, come along to try the friendly club. For more information call Olivia on 07583 484065.

FRIDAY Bridge Club meets at Burcot Village Hall every Friday evening. We play friendly, competitive Bridge in comfortable surrounds. We meet at 18:45 for a prompt start at 19:00. Refreshments are provided free of charge. For full details please contact the Secretary Ed Payne on 07950951122 or visit www.bridgewebs.com/friday

BROMSGROVE Bridge Club plays every Tuesday evening from 7.25 to 10.30pm at The Court Leet (a Hungry Horse Pub) 174 Worcester Road, Bromsgrove, B61 7AY.
We are very friendly and welcome guests or potential new members, with or without a partner. The club is affiliated to the English Bridge Union and the Worcestershire Contract Bridge Association. Contact the Secretary, Sally Flood, on 01527 832468 or sallyflood@gmail.com

BROMSGROVE Board Gamers is a friendly group which meets at 7.30pm each Weds at the Ladybird Inn, Aston Fields. More info on Facebook 'Bromsgrove Board Gamers'.

BARNT Green Duplicate Bridge Club meets at St Andrew's Church Hall each Weds afternoon at 1.39pm. The club would make new members very welcome. For more information, speak to Cathy on 0121 445 1518.

REDDITCH CHESS CLUB meets at Alvechurch & Hopwood Cricket Club, Birmingham Road, Alvechurch B48 7TA, every Wednesday at 7.15pm September - May. The club has teams playing in both Birmingham and Worcester leagues. New players are welcome - just turn up or contact Giles Stanton on 07932 053621 or David Smith on 07540 304620.

ART, CRAFT & LITERATURE

THE WITHYBED POETS are local people who write poetry and share and discuss it with each other. You don't have to live in Withybed Green, though most of their meetings are there. They meet regularly every six weeks or so. They like to read to local audiences and some of them write "poetry on request". The date of next meeting is 1 November. For more information, contact mail@marygreen.plus.com.

PAINTING & DRAWING If you enjoy painting and drawing, try this friendly community group which meets in the Rubery Leisure Centre, Holywell Lane, on Monday mornings, 9am-1pm, catering for all ages and abilities. The facilities are excellent for both indoor and outdoor working depending on personal preference and weather conditions. Tea and coffee is provided. Places are available. For further information telephone: 0121 453 7716 (Fridays).

COMMON THREAD: Bring your knitting, crochet, patchwork, sewing etc. All are welcome. Friendly help and chat. Meets on the last Saturday of each month (apart from Christmas Day, of course!) in The Wheel at St. Catherine's, Blackwell B60 1BN. Please bring your own drink to stay covid safe. Further information from Angela Bevan 0121 477 9924.

THE "CRAFTY LADIES" craft group meets every Monday morning in Alvechurch Library from 10am–1pm, with knitting, crocheting, sewing, quilting etc. More info on 01905 822722.

BURCOT WOODTURNING CLUB offers a friendly meeting place for woodturners of all abilities and experience. A varied programme

continues overleaf

continued from previous page

includes demos, talks, hands-on practical evenings and visits to exhibitions. The group meets on the first Thurs each month, 7.15–9.30pm at Burcot Village Hall. Visit www.burcotwoodturners.org.uk

ALVECHURCH LIBRARY is available to host day and short courses such as card-making or scrapbooking. If you have a skill to teach or share and would like to rent a space, call the Hub on 01905 822722 and ask for Alvechurch Library.

AVONCROFT ARTS SOCIETY at Avoncroft Arts Centre (Redditch Road, Bromsgrove B60 4JR), runs tutored/ non-tutored classes in Art, Textiles, Ceramics, Embroidery and Dance. Contact AAS on 01527 833829 or avoncroftarts@btconnect.com

ALVECHURCH ART GROUP meets at the Baptist Hall (rear of church) every Tues from 1–3.30pm, using all mediums except oil. All welcome, especially beginners. Friendly tuition. Call Paul on 0121 445 5437 or drop in.

ALVECHURCH LIBRARY Readers Group meets in the library on the first Thursday of the month from 2pm–3pm. New members always welcome. And don't forget that you can access online audio and e-books 24/7, free of charge, by downloading the Borrowbox app. Visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/libraries

LICKEY HILLS ART SOCIETY, a friendly bunch of artists and those interested in art, meet at Longbridge Methodist Church, Bristol Road, B45 9TY, on the first Sat each month at 7.30pm. Open to artists and non-artists alike. For more info email Lyn lyndasharp2010@yahoo.com or come along – the members would love to see you.

SEW TOGETHER meets on Tuesday mornings from 9.30am to 12.30pm during term time at the new Cofton Village hall. They meet weekly to sew and socialise. All abilities are welcome and there are a variety of sewing machines to borrow if required. For more information contact Avril on sewtogether64@gmail.com or see Sew Together Cofton Hackett on Facebook.

BARNT GREEN ART CLUB meets at Barnt Green Scout and Guide HQ in Blackwell Road, Barnt Green. Tuesday morning and Tuesday afternoon sessions. Workshops with visiting tutors during each term. Enquiries from improvers and intermediate artists are welcomed. Jackie: 0121 445 4745.

MARLBROOK QUILTERS meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Redditch Road, Stoke Heath, Bromsgrove B60 4JR. They are a small friendly group who would like to welcome new members. For more information contact Maggie Forknell 07973 313034 or Sheila Nunnerley 0121 445 2238.

THE SEASONS ART CLASS is an art course where you can discover your inner artist. Perfect for absolute beginners to improvers. Classes held at Rowney Green Village Hall, Bournheath Village Hall & Ullenhall Village Hall. Get in touch to find out more by emailing seasonsartredditch@outlook.com.

KINGS NORTON PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY meet at The Tennis Club, Grange Hill Road, Birmingham B38 8RE. Season starts 18/10/23 at 8.00pm. For information contact Dave Wall Tel: 0121 458 2562, email: dave.walluk@virgin.net

GARDENS & FLOWERS

BLACKWELL COMMUNITY GARDEN in the grounds of St Catherine, Blackwell. Pop along to help water, plant and harvest. Info on 0121 445 1425.

ROWNEY GREEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY meet at The Village Hall on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7.15p.m. The next meeting on the 9th November 2023 will be the Annual General Meeting followed by Cheese and Wine.
All members are welcome on the evening re: the election of the Committee. The Society is always looking for "new blood" to join the Committee so if you feel you would like to give it a try please speak to a Committee Member on the evening.
For more information please telephone Lindsay Smith on 01527 592874.

DODFORD GARDENING CLUB meets on the 2nd Monday each month (except August) usually in Dodford Village Hall at 7.45pm. New members and visitors welcome. More info at www.dodfordgardeningclub.co.uk or call Penny on 07706 153618.

ROWNEY GREEN FLOWER CLUB, meets on the fourth Thursday of the month except in December when it is the first Thursday. The cost for visitors is £5, with refreshments included. Arrangements will be raffled at the event.

BROMSGROVE FLOWER CLUB holds regular monthly meetings on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Meets at 2pm, at All Saints Church Hall, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove B601AF. A yearly membership is available or come as a visitor & dip in & out. Refreshments & then a demonstration of flower arrangements and a raffle and you may be lucky and take one home. Further information on 0121 445 1915.

SOLIHULL & District Orchid Society meets on the 1st Sat each month at St George & St Teresa's Parish Centre, Station Road, Dorridge B39 8EZ. New members and visitors welcome. For more information or advice you can call Monica Johnson on 01926 747822 or email at kenneth.johnson99@ntlworld.com. You can also visit www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk to see more.

HELP & ADVICE

POPPIES' is a monthly bereavement support group — contact Rev Sheri Gidney on 0121 445 1185 for details.

DIVORCED/separated and having trouble seeing your children? Being excluded from their lives? The ASSOCIATION FOR SHARED PARENTING has been helping mums and dads in the family court system and problems over contact and residence for over 20 years. Visit www.associationforsharedparenting.org.uk

REPAIR CAFE is for those looking to save their money and fix broken or faulty household items. The Repair Cafe is part of an international network that keeps faulty appliances and clothes out of landfill and offers 'a cuppa' and a slice of cake to visitors while they wait. Visit the Repair Shop on the first Saturday of every month 2-5pm at All Saints Hall, Burcot Lane, B60 1AD. For more info: 07804251731 or repaircafebromsgrove@gmail.com

ALVECHURCH LIBRARY hosts one-to-one Computer Sessions for people wanting to learn the basics. If you need help with emails or advice on surfing online then pop in to arrange for free tuition, provided by volunteers. They can also help with online applications for Blue Badges and bus passes. For more info call The Hub on 01905 822722 and ask for Alvechurch Library.

GUIDE DOGS are looking for volunteers who could give a few hours of their time to help someone locally and living with sight loss, get out and about. Volunteer sighted guides support the person they are partnered with to feel part of the community.
No previous experience is necessary and full training will be provided and the role is extremely flexible! More information email MidlandsMSG@guidedogs.org.uk or visit www.guidedogs.org.uk

WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

FINSTALL CROSS WI meets at Finstall Village Hall on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. For more info see www.finstallcrosswi.wordpress.com or email finstallcrosswi@gmail.com

BEOLEY WI meets on the first Tuesday of each month in Beoley Village Hall at 7.00pm. More info from Joan Lovett on 01527 584047 or email beoleysec@wfedwi.org.uk

BENTLEY PAUNCEFOOT WI meets at 7.30pm on the second Tues every month at Bentley Village Hall (B97 5TB). More information from Helen Spence on 01527 822611 or email bentleypauncefootsec@wfedwi.org.uk

BARNT GREEN WI meets at the Baptist Church at 7.30pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month. For more information: Jenny Jellie 07983 865372.

BROMSGROVE BELLES WI meets on the second Monday each month at the Meeting Room at St Godwald's Church at 7.30pm. For more info, contact President Helen Holbeche at helenholbeche@gmail.com

ALVECHURCH WI meets on the second Monday each month in Alvechurch Village Hall, at 7.30pm. For more information email Lin Neal lin.neal@hotmail.com or alvechurchpres@wfedwi.org.uk

LICKEY WI usually meets on the first Tues every month at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall (Trinity Centre), Old Birmingham Road, Lickey. More info from Jenny Ryder on 0121 445 1872, Lickeywi@gmail.com or www.lickeywi.wordpress.com

HILLSIDE AT ALVECHURCH WI meets at 7.45pm on the first Weds each month at The Ark, Alvechurch. For more info call Pat McDonagh on 0121 628 4121.

BLACKWELL & BURCOT WI meets at Burcot Village Hall on the second Weds each month, at 2pm. For info call President Mrs Barbara Knight on 0121 445 3456.

HOPWOOD WI meets at Hopwood Village Hall on the first Thurs of the month at 7.30pm. For more information call Ann Thurrell on 0121 447 7668.

ST CATHERINE'S BLACKWELL WI meets on the 3rd Wednesday each month at 7.30pm at Burcot Village Hall. Contact Sue Barrett for more information on 01527 596092 or susanbarratt222@gmail.com

RUBERY WI meets on the 2nd Weds of the month at 7.30pm at Beacon Church Centre, when there are speakers, activities and competitions. The 4th Weds of each month is the craft evening. Non-members are welcome. Contact Judie1055@yahoo.co.uk 07810765314.

FAIRFIELD WI meet at Fairfield village hall on the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm. For further details contact Carol Hine at fairfieldwi1932@gmail.com

VILLAGE VENUES FOR HIRE

HOPWOOD VILLAGE HALL is available for hire for parties, groups and gatherings. Please contact Booking Secretary Ann Thurrell on 0121 447 7668 or visit www.hopwoodvillagehall.co.uk

TARDEBIGGE COMMUNITY HALL for hire: large, bright facility for functions, clubs, societies and all activities. To book call 07763 446902 or email tchbookings@gmail.com

THE WHEEL COMMUNITY ROOM IN BLACKWELL has daytime, evening and weekend availability for one-off and regular hire —more info on 0121 445 1425.

THE TRINITY CENTRE IN LICKEY has evening and weekend availability for one-off and regular hire – more info on 0121 445 1425.

BARNT GREEN PARISH CENTRE has large and medium sized lounges available for regular hire for some morning and early afternoon sessions each week. Please contact the Parish Administrator on 0121 447 7097.

THE ARK AT ST LAURENCE has a large hall and kitchen, and smaller upper room for hire, for one-off and regular hires. More information and bookings please contact Lynda on 0121 447 7955 or email admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

ALVECHURCH VILLAGE HALL is available for hire to groups, clubs, societies, and private parties. The large bright hall has a stage, PA system, kitchen and bar area. There is also a smaller conference room available for hire. Enquiries to the Hall Manager Andrea Ottley on 07455892909 or hallmanager.avh@gmail.com

ALVECHURCH CRICKET CLUB PAVILION is available for hire: weekdays for community groups/clubs/societies, evening functions/ private parties. Licensed bar, dance floor, kitchen area and great outdoor space. Enquiries to Stuart Brereton via 07775 714165 or ahcc.bar@gmail.com

FAIRFIELD VILLAGE HALL is available to hire for functions, groups and parties. It has a large hall with kitchen facilities. Contact the booking secretary Andrew on 07762749943 or bookings@fvh.org.uk. See website for details www.fvh.org.uk

FEATURE IN WHAT'S ON

The deadline for submissions to feature in the What's On section in the November issue of *The Village* is 15 November 2023. Please email: info@villageonline.co.uk

Christmas Day

COMMUNITY LUNCH, 1PM

The Ark, Alvechurch

Do you fancy some company on Christmas Day?

Whether you live alone, you are a couple or a larger family unit you are invited to join us at The Ark for a Christmas Day Community Lunch.

MENU

A tradition Christmas lunch with Turkey or Nut Roast and all the trimmings.

Dessert will be a selection of Christmas treats including cheese and biscuits.

Wine, soft drinks and tea and coffee.

TRANSPORT

Would you like to come but need help in getting to The Ark? We can help with this too! Call and speak to us.

BOOKING

If you know that you are definitely coming, please book in advance.

If on Christmas Day you would like to come but haven't booked please do come along anyway, there is always plenty to go round.

COST

Free. There is no cost

To book or for more information please speak to Lynda at The Ark 0121 447 7955 admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

Here come the girls

EVERY issue of *The Village* magazine (or close enoug...) we bring you news about Alvechurch Football Club men's team. So, what about the women's team?

After the roaring success of the Lionesses England team in the past few years, at the 2020 Euros and the recent World Cup, women's football has become one of the fastest growing sports in the UK.

Alvechurch FC women's team has been operational since 2018, and won the league and cup double last season. The team now have ambitions of creating more junior teams and more league and cup success in the near future.

The club currently sit at the top of the league in tier six, and are yet to be beaten this season. They now progress into the next round of the country cup.

A spokesperson for the women's team said: "We aim to win the league again this year, and go as far as we can in all cup competitions.

"But beyond the on-field success, we wish to raise the aspirations of young junior players and create role models in our first team for the young players coming through."

The women's side have recently appointed a new manager, Dave Healey, who has wasted no time in recruiting top players to blend with the existing team who performed outstandingly and were instrumental in the club's successes last year.

Despite the huge uptake and interest in the game, sparked by the national women's success, investment in women's football remains unmatched to the men's teams.

"There is an increased investment in women's football, in particular in the Women's Super League and Championship divisions," the club spokesman explained, "but in the lower leagues we have to be creative in how we bring in and spend finances.

Above: Celebrations on the pitch. Pictures/***Paul Hasker.***

Taking a shot: Alvechurch ladies show off their skills.

All thumbs up for Alvechurch women's.

"Every sponsor that is able to support our players is a star in our eyes, and allows us to improve the playing experience for the players."

There are also plenty of ways to support your local women's teams in addition to sponsorship. "Every person who comes to your games is showing their support to the players; a group who love football and want to feel valued in the community," the spokesman said.

Alvechurch and the surrounding villages and supporters witnessed first-hand the excitement of the men's team's perfomance in the FA Cup last year, before being knocked out by League One side Forest Green Rovers.

The women's team play home fixtures at The Hayes facility next to Birmingham City FC's Wast Hills training grounds.

For more information on how to support the team, including information on fixtures and find out their latest news, visit their social media pages.

@AlvechurchWomen on X, formerly known as Twitter, or search 'Alvechurch Women's FC' on Facebook.

After just two wins in eight league starts, Alvechurch FC brought in new manager James Fry . . . and it's looking like a sweet selection.

Frying start: James Fry (second left) and some of his team. Picture/***Ian Macvie.***

Fry unwraps delight

CHange the manager, change your fortunes . . . and so it has proved at Alvechurch FC where the team has won four and drawn once since parting ways with Ian Long.

Previous assistant manager Richard Colwell and Matt Kirby steadied the ship with the club's first away point of the season, drawing 2-2 at Berkhamsted, followed by a hard fought 1-0 victory at home against promotion hopefuls Leamington.

Then a new era for The Church got underway with the arrival of new manager James Fry, with wins in his first three mataches in charge.

The first saw Alvechurch beat Long Eaton United 2-1 at homes, followed by away wins at Anstey Nomads in the FA Trophy and a tremendous battling 0-1 win away at high-flying Stamford.

As *The Village* went to press, the club had risen from a shakey spot to eighth in the league.

The new first team manager, Fry, started his career at Birmingham City before playing non-league football across the midlands with clubs including Kidderminster Harriers, Leamington, Stratford, Tamworth and Rugby.

Since retiring from playing, he has been coaching at the Birmingham City youth academy.

The management team is completed with first team coach Steve Hensel who was at the club under the previous manager and Richard Batchelor as a player coach.

Batchelor has played at this level for many years, including spells at Leamington, Hednesford, Brackley , and Rushall Olympic.

Goalmouth action (above): The Church played the whole of the second half of their 1-0 victory over Anstey Nomads with ten men after a controversial red card. In another show of resilience, Alvehurch came away with three points from Stamford despite finishing with only nine men. Picture/***Ian Macvie.***

AFC FIXTURES

November

4th Coalville Town (h) 3.00
11th Nuneaton Borough (a) 3.00
14th Boldmere St Michaels (h) 19.45
Birmingham Senior Cup
18th St Ives Town (h) 3.00
21st Bromsgrove Sporting (a) 19.45
25th Kettering Town (h) 3.00 League

December

2nd Stourbridge (a) 3.00
9th Royston Town (h) 3.00
16th Stratford Town (a) 3.00
23rd Needham Market (h) 3.00
26th Redditch United (a) 3.00

■ Having reached the semi-final of the Birmingham Senior FA Challenge Cup last season before losing to runners-up Coventry City, Alvechurch have been drawn at Home to Boldmere St Michaels in the first round of this year's campaign

The tie will be played at Lye Meadow on Tuesday 14th November with a 19.45 kick off.

Order Now
For January Installation*

Kitchens | Bedrooms | Home Living

AK FITTED INTERIORS

Visit us at: Saxon Park, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, B60 4AD

Tel: 01527 835924 | Showrooms also at Kenilworth, Knowle and Studley

www.akfittedinteriors.co.uk

*Orders up to 30.11.23, subject to availability. T&Cs apply.